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HIGHWAYS AND BY-WAYS
IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

LIFE AND LETTERS OF JANET ERSKINE
STUART, Superior General of the Society of
the Sacred Heart, 1857 to 1914. By MAUD
MONAHAN. With an Introduction by His
Eminence CARDINAL BOURNE, Archbishop of
Westminster. With Portraits and other Illus-
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THE EDUCATION OF CATHOLIC GIRLS.
By JANET ERSKINE STUART. With a Preface
by His Eminence CARDINAL BOURNE, Arch-
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AND MADRAS

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BY JANET E. STUART

With a Preface by
His Eminence CARDINAL BOURNE
ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER

Edited by M. MONAHAN



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PREFACE

THE Life of the late Reverend Mother Stuart has been very widely read and greatly appreciated. To those not conversant with the religious communities of the Catholic Church it has been a revelation of their power, of their widespread influence, and of the enormous field which they give for the development and expansion of all the qualities, natural and supernatural, of their members. Many Catholics too, living without close contact with these great societies, will have learned much, of which they were previously ignorant, about the history, aims, and achievements of religious life under the guidance and government of the Catholic Church. The friends—even the ones who knew her most intimately—and the fellow-religious of Mother Stuart know her now more fully than ever before. With fuller knowledge, they cherish and venerate her memory more deeply than in the past. Thus we may believe that there is no one who has read the Life who will not give a hearty welcome to her thoughts and writings contained in the volume which has been prepared. As they read them, they will thank God for the varied gifts which He bestowed so abundantly upon her; and for

the use, constant, self-sacrificing, unstinted, which she made of them. For the following pages are the work of one who had few free moments at her disposal. In spite of her modest retiring character, notwithstanding the shrinking shyness of her disposition, carried in early days almost to excess, she soon found engrossing duties and responsibilities confided to her. She speedily became the servant of many souls that were entrusted to her. But every moment of constantly interrupted leisure was seized ; and her power of concentration, quickness of observation, retentive memory, exceptional sense of fitness and proportion, have given us these papers, meant, so far as her own intention went, for the benefit, recreation, or assistance of her religious family. Now they will serve a wider purpose ; and, while affording to all their readers intellectual enjoyment and refreshment, they will lead many among them to thank God once more for having given Mother Stuart to our country, and for their own possession of her friendship.

FRANCIS CARDINAL BOURNE,
Archbishop of Westminster.

September 3, 1923.

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PRAECISA EST VELUT A TEXENTE,
VITA MEA

I WAS travelling on foot for my pleasure in a quiet easy way through a lonely part of England, and one evening while waiting for my supper to be prepared in the country inn, I strolled into the graveyard and amused myself by reading the inscriptions on the tombstones. It was one of those few happy West-country villages that had lived through the stormy times of the Reformation without losing the old faith, so that over each grave you could see the cross in one form or another as of old, and below it the humble prayer for the dead : *Requiescat in pace*.

One tombstone however roused my curiosity. It was exceedingly ugly, in the very worst taste of the eighteenth century, but it was of white marble while all the others were of native sandstone, and I said to myself, ' Here lies one who, even in death, would rise above his fellows, or else one whose friends have wished to show their affection in the costliest way though not in the best taste.' The inscription on the tomb was as follows :

IN MEMORY OF
ONESIMUS PERKINS—WEAVER
on whose soul sweet JESUS have mercy.
Erected in grateful memory by
HIS PARISH PRIEST

It bore the date of fifty years before. I was asking myself what Onesimus Perkins, the weaver, could have done to deserve a memorial of white marble in grateful

remembrance from his Parish Priest—perhaps he had saved his life or that of some one dear to him, perhaps he had woven the altar-linen gratis. . . .

Hearing a feeble cough behind me, I turned round and saw an old man in the ecclesiastical dress which had been abolished by the penal laws, but had never been laid aside in this happy Catholic village. He looked at least eighty years of age, and it flashed on me at once, as he drew slowly near the grave, that he was no doubt the same Parish Priest that had erected the monument, and was coming to pray by the side of the good weaver. Curiosity mastered every other feeling, and taking my hat in my hand I said, with some hesitation, ‘Reverend Father, may I ask the reason why Onesimus Perkins, the weaver, has deserved such a memorial from his Priest?’ The good Priest looked over his spectacles, smiling as he closed his breviary, and said: ‘Sir, it will give me great pleasure to tell you what Onesimus Perkins did for me—he rendered me more services than any other man in my life, yet he never knew it.’ ‘If he never knew it, they did not cost him very dear, Reverend Father,’ I ventured to say. ‘They were none the less precious to me,’ was his answer, ‘but listen to my story.

‘I have been Parish Priest here for over fifty years and as you may easily conceive I had not much training to fit me for the post, barely enough learning to be ordained priest. I was sent here by the pressure of the times to have charge of souls, my head still full of camps and battle-fields, for I had dreamt of war since my boyhood, and I may say I had little of the priest, except my sacred character.

‘Well, Onesimus Perkins, the weaver, came soon after my arrival and settled in a little cottage where I now live. My first interview was on the subject of tithes. I called at his house and was rapping impetuously at his door, unable to make him hear from the noise of his loom, when I saw Giles Sharp, a notorious poacher, with a ferret in

his pocket and a lurcher at his heels, sneak up to the back window of Perkins' house, and putting his head through he gave a sharp whistle and the loom stopped. "Perkins," said the poacher, "what has thee had for dinner to-day?" "Black bread," said the old weaver. "Who'd eat black bread when they can have a leveret or a plump partridge for nothing?" pursued Giles; "here, make a net with thy clever fingers before sundown, meet me at the corner of the wood at moonrise, and to-morrow thee'll have something better than black bread." "Giles," said Perkins' voice again, "I want none of thy leverets and plump partridges, I'm not living for my dinner, man. I've a soul as well as a body; there, get thee to some honest work, Giles, and make thy peace with God, thou'll maybe not see the sun set twice again." The poacher turned away with a short laugh, but I stepped up to the window, asking, "What made thee think of death, friend?" "My shuttle, Father," he answered, "the loom makes me think of many things; my shuttle flies so fast till the thread has all run out of the bobbins, and then I give one snap with the scissors, and it is all over, just like death. I think every day it may be the last throw with my shuttle—it makes me very content with the little I have and very careful not to lose days fooling and sinning. You know, Father, once the shuttle has missed its throw the pattern's spoiled, and I'm trying to weave out my pattern right for Heaven."

'It was very simple, sir, but it opened my eyes to a great deal, and the first words that came into my mind were: "*Non in solo pane vivit homo.*" Before night I had stripped my little house of all but the bare necessities of life, that no creature of sense might keep me back from my God.

'Three years afterwards, the fever of emigration came upon my people. I was struck with it myself. I lived in a dream of the Golden West for them and for me. We would go out and live a patriarchal life in the new country,

with the gold and silver, the corn and the wine. I went to speak to the old weaver, but he shook his head. "No, Father," said he, "the emigration agent came to see me and tempt me with his tales of the new country, the gold and silver, the corn and wine; God gives me a little time every day, Father, it is like my loom—what is done is rolled up, and a little comes out as I want it, and the bit in front of me is rolled up still. I only see for to-day and I don't know what's coming to-morrow; I think the gold-fields are most a dream, and I don't want to see beyond what God has given me to-day."

"I thought it true and that I had been carried away by a dream of my imagination, while God wanted me to do my work as priest in the present moment as best I could, praying and baptizing and catechising and weeping over my sins. Now you see, sir, how Onesimus was my friend.

"So, when one of the great Socialist leaders came down and tried to set my people on fire, I sent him down to Onesimus, and he told me afterwards that the old man, instead of talking to him, had shown him how the loom worked, how the pattern was overhead and he never saw it, how it was drawn by a great artist and then thought out by an arithmetician, and then given to the common workman to carry out, saying to the voluble preacher of "social reform" and "universal suffrage" that he thought there must always be one above the other, some to work and some to plan and think, and God the great Artist watching the web from above . . . till the reformer went away disgusted—but I saw what the old man meant, and learned a lesson of dependence.

"Then when Onesimus was dying, I was troubled in my mind about the new-fangled philosophers who cut the ground from under our feet, till we don't know if there is a God at all. I went down to him and said: "Onesimus, dearest child, tell me, before you go home, what you think of God and the world to come, and if

you feel you are stepping out into darkness, not knowing whither ? ” He turned to me and said : “ Father, hear me ; a weaver works all his life at the wrong side of the web, it looks all wrong, no pattern at all, all disorder, only when it is finished he can turn it round and see the beautiful design the Master was working out. So it is now. I am going to turn my web, and do you think, Father, that if I trusted the design of an artist, I am going to distrust what I always believed in ? You know the learned reasons, Father, but I can only say that my heart tells me that I am going to God.”

‘ So he died, and, dying, taught me to walk by faith, and to leave the design to the One who knows what He is doing, and not to want to see.

‘ Now you see how I owe the graces of my life to this poor weaver.’

The old Priest gave me his blessing and I asked for his prayers. I shall never forget the weaver’s grave, for I found by degrees that the whole of my spiritual life was in that loom. The shuttle flying so quickly tells that now is my only moment to give to God ; a moment lost—the threads cross again, the opportunity is gone, grace passes, and the pattern is spoiled.

Then again, the work is always in the present ; what is past is rolled up, not to be looked at again till the web is finished, what is before is also rolled up, not to be seen till the moment comes to work it, and so I live between two eternities in a present that is *une sorte d’éternité pour moi*.

And above all, I must learn to live by faith, like the weaver, never seeing the plan of my life, but trusting to God for it and working on the wrong side as it seems, but working for a reality, not of my reason or the imagination of my own fancies, but one, of which God has not only designed the whole, but counted each stitch and tied every change of thread, from the beginning to the end.

CANDIDUS CANTABIT MORIENS

(*A Spiritual Fairy Story*)

THE stately Abbey of St. Gilbert in the Fens was well known to every Christian of Lincolnshire in the twelfth century. Not so, perhaps, the story of what befell Brother Placid of that monastery in the year of our Lord 1160.

It fell out that during the singing of the conventual High Mass on one of the festivals in early spring, Brother Placid was assailed by a temptation, and that not for the first time. Brother Placid was regular in observance, fervent in prayer, punctual in choir, the first to rise for Matins, humble and obedient, patient under correction, diligent in reading, but Brother Placid could not sing, and hence came the oft-repeated temptation to discontent when his brothers chanted the praises of God, and a few low husky notes were all that he could utter in the choir. And the beauty of this particular High Mass brought back the temptation in all its force. The boy monks in the choir were flinging such wild free notes up into the vault's roof, the clear trebles rose so high one after the other: '*In gloria, in gloria, in gloria, Dei Patris,*' the graver voices of the elder monks swelled so richly in the great *Amen*—that while the others thanked God in the fervour of their devotion, Brother Placid bowed his head in his stall and wept for very discontent.

No sooner was the High Mass over, than the young monk hastened to the cell of the Father Abbot to disclose his temptation and accuse himself of his fault. The

Abbot, receiving him kindly, pointed out to him in a few words his fault and his danger, and bid him walk in solitude, and by prayer and meditation strengthen himself to resist temptation.

Forth then went Brother Placid at the bidding of the Abbot; the low clouds were rolling over the fen country, and the bare boughs were rattling in the keen cold breeze, but his eyes were bent downwards in prayer and he heeded them not. Between the wood and the cold black mere he wandered without raising his eyes, struggling with his rebellious feelings to bring them into captivity to reason and to faith.

‘What is the matter, Brother Placid?’ said a tiny voice all at once, and looking, he saw, almost at his feet, a little figure in green small-clothes and peaked cap; so small was he that he sat cross-legged and quite at his ease on the green frill of an early aconite, and looked up with a merry mischievous face.

‘*Vade retro, Satana,*’ cried the startled monk, signing himself with the cross—‘*adjuro te, abrenuntio te, anathematizo te!*’ he continued, expecting to see the elf shrivel up and disappear, but the only reply was a tinkling little laugh. ‘Not at all, not at all,’ laughed the little gentleman, ‘you make a great mistake, keep those bad words for bad company, I am not the devil at all.’ And again his merriment overcame him and he laughed until the aconite shook under him. ‘*Exorciso te,*’ began Brother Placid, ‘*in nomine . . .*’ ‘Come, come,’ said the little man, ‘no more of this, I am only one of the good people, an elfin prince, in fact, and I come to do you a good turn. Look here! I know you are troubled . . . Ahem! . . . at your want of voice, well, I cannot give you a voice; but I can show you something that will make you quite content, are you willing?’ ‘Yes,’ said Brother Placid, now half ashamed of his fears. ‘Very well,’ said the Elfin Prince, jumping off his little green throne, ‘follow me,’ and he ran down the slope to the edge of the mere so fast,

that Placid found it hard to follow him with any religious decorum.

'Now,' said the prince, 'bathe your face three times in the water of the mere and each time call out as loud as you can: *Omnis spiritus*—then wait for an answer.'

It seemed to Brother Placid something like an incantation. 'Nevertheless,' he said, 'the words are holy and the action innocent,' so he knelt by the side of the black cold lake and plunged his head in the water. '*Omnis spiritus*,' he cried in his poor hoarse voice, and a faint sound, like an echo, came back to him from across the lake; it seemed like words, yet he could not catch them. 'Again,' said the green elf, rubbing his little hands. Placid repeated the ceremonial and cried, '*Omnis spiritus*,' as before. This time the echo, or at least the answering voice, was clearer. '*Laudet Dominum*,' it sang. 'Once more,' shouted the tiny prince, capering with delight, and as Brother Placid again bathed his head and cried out the prescribed words, the answer '*Laudet Dominum*' rang all around him, so clear and full, that it seemed as if the whole choir of his brethren were chanting it.

He rose from his knees in wonder. 'Now,' said the elf, 'your ears are opened to what other mortals can never hear, follow me and see what you can hear.' Placid accepted the somewhat ambiguous invitation, and scrambled as fast as he could after his little friend along the marshy edge of the lake, and he saw, as he turned round a low headland, and came on a wood reaching down to the water's edge, that all the ground under the trees was white with snowdrops in full flower.

'Listen,' said the green gentleman, holding up his hand. Brother Placid listened; the wind seemed to shake the snowdrops, and in a moment the wood was filled with the sound of silver chimes clashing like joy bells all together, and then parting with a thousand little peals.

‘ No earthly chimes were ever so sweet,’ said the monk ; ‘ is it the wind that peals the bells ? ’

The little man looked offended.

‘ My daughters,’ he said, with a superb wave of his hand towards the snowdrops, and as the monk looked again he saw at each flower a tiny figure pulling sturdily at the stem, as his own lay brothers pulled in the belfry of the Abbey on feast days.

‘ *Omnis spiritus*,’ he cried, his fears returning. ‘ *Laudet Dominum*,’ rang the answer from each silvery bell, but one by one the chimes died out, the fairies vanished, and the white snowdrops withered.

‘ Do you understand ? ’ said the prince, wiping away a miniature tear ; ‘ they are white and they die. *Candidus cantabit moriens*.’

‘ I do not understand,’ said the monk.

‘ Come here, then,’ said the elf a little severely ; ‘ I thought every monk knew Latin.’ He led the brother back to the edge of the mere and said again : ‘ Listen.’

Brother Placid listened, and rich full bird-notes came in waves across the water to him, plaintive and sorrowful but so full of melody that he knew not what to think. Every bird and beast that dwelt by the mere was the friend of Placid, and its voice was known to him. ‘ The nightingales in May sing not such notes,’ he said ; ‘ what bird is that ? ’ The prince pointed to the open water beyond the reeds, and there, gleaming snow-white upon the black ripples, floated a swan. The monk held his breath, the notes grew fainter, and in a few minutes the beautiful head fell back upon the snow-white wings, and the swan was silent in death.

‘ Do you understand now ? ’ said the elf, ‘ the white swan sings in dying.’

‘ I begin to understand,’ said the monk meekly.

‘ Follow me again, then,’ continued his guide, and led him away from the lake side to a low thatched hut that stood under the shelter of the wood. As they drew near

the door, the monk heard the sound of a boy's voice, singing loud, sweet, true notes that stirred his very soul :

‘ Vitam præsta puram
Iter para tutum
Ut videntes Jesum
Semper collætémur . . . ’

sang the boy, and as the elfin prince opened the door, the monk started with surprise, to see whence the voice came. From a child so crippled, so emaciated, in such rags and dirt, that he seemed hardly a human being.

‘ He is dying of starvation and neglect,’ said the elf. ‘ Can we not save him ? ’ asked the monk, his voice trembling with pity. ‘ No,’ said his guide, as the last long note died away, ‘ he is dead.’

‘ Now do you understand ? *Candidus cantabit moriens*, his soul was white as driven snow ; be white, and as you die, you too shall sing—go back to your monastery.’

Brother Placid went back, as in a dream, to his monastery and never again was he assailed by his old temptation, but year by year he grew more humble, more faithful in observance, more mortified and more prayerful.

Ten years afterwards, when the hour of Prime was being solemnly chanted on a great festival, the cantor, who should have intoned the psalm, was troubled. He could not utter a note ; a movement of anxiety passed through the ranks of the waiting monks, till Brother Placid, rising in his stall, intoned in a voice so clear and thrilling, that all the monks were silent with astonishment : ‘ *Beati immaculati in via*,’ and as none were able to carry on the psalm, through their wonder and emotion, Brother Placid sang aloud by himself till the psalms of Prime were ended. Never had the walls of the choir re-echoed to so sweet a voice, to so pure and sweet a song.

‘ Lay him on the ashes,’ said the Abbot, who alone knew his story, ‘ Brother Placid is dying ’—and as they

laid him prostrate before the altar, the monk's fervent soul passed away. '*Candidus cantabit moriens*,' said the Abbot. 'Yea,' said the Prior, 'for years, Brother Placid's spotless life has been sweeter in the monastery than even the song in which he died.'

THE HUNT

(To the Editor of the ' Religious Sportsman ')

REVEREND SIR,

As you were good enough to print in your columns an article from my pen on the ' Moral Virtues ' Steeplechase of 1889 or 1890, I venture to enclose another contribution on a run I had with the hounds in the Vale of Tears some ten years ago, which may be of interest to some of your readers.

I am, Rev. Sir, yours truly,

A LOVER OF SPORT AND SEEKER
AFTER WISDOM.

The meets were advertised last week as follows :

Monday : The White Hart.

Wednesday : Shuffler's cross-roads.

Saturday : Roehampton Convent Spinneys.

I consulted a friend, who knew the country, about these meets, for I was new to it. He told me that they generally got a good run from the White Hart, but my favourite horse was lame and the others could not go far in such a flying country. Shuffler's cross-roads was a meet he could not recommend ; the coverts were so close, it was like chasing the game in and out of a rabbit warren. I elected for the Convent Spinneys, always sure to hold a fox, and my horse was sound again before the end of the week.

I started early to avoid that rush to the meet with an expectation of being late, that is so trying to horse and rider. That quiet ride to cover, looking forward to a

good run, is one of the best things of the day, and so it was on this occasion.

It was soft as a May morning, though early in the season, blessed with the 'southerly wind' that a huntsman proverbially loves, but not the corresponding 'cloudy sky'—bright sunshine after rain instead—one of those balmy hunting days that lives in one's mind like a picture, with its tawny woods, its dripping fences and the grey November pastures. Half a mile or so out I came up with the hounds. The huntsman Right Reason was trotting gaily on before (they have strange names in the Vale of Tears country, Mr. Editor; for instance, they call the fox Happiness, as we call him Reynard), the hounds followed in capital order, whipped in by the two brothers Law. The name of the pack is '*Media ad finem*,' they are big deep-mouthed hounds, short in the leg and long in the back like a certain Midland pack of heroic memory, steady goers too, not given to rioting after sheep or rabbits. The *Media ad finem* hounds attend strictly to business, and they are admirably hunted by Right Reason. He is a feature of the hunt, and so is his nephew Nat. Law, the first whip. Both have cool heads and even tempers, and are not stirred into intemperate language, even when a flock of sheep crosses the scent, or a kicking horse gets in among the hounds. They have hunted this pack for years, know every inch of the country, and where every fox has been found for the last twenty seasons.

I fall in next with a sportsman who is known to his friends by the name of 'The Philosopher,' and we jog on together. He is a walking encyclopædia of knowledge in the eyes of the hunt, and is a referee on all subjects, horse-flesh, pedigrees (equine and human), topography, local tradition, and that delicate question of 'Who's who'—so necessary for new members of a hunt. 'Now tell me, Philosopher,' I said, as we cantered over the last half mile, 'who is who?' We can see all the field from

THE HUNT

here?' 'Look,' he answered, 'I will point them out as they stand; do you notice that man with the cut of hard rider on a big chestnut horse? That is Mr. Golightly, he is one of the Passions, his mother's name was Irascible, and that is his favourite horse Daring—you will see some break-neck riding if you follow him. That odious Cockney rider behind him is a man called Vane, nobody speaks to him; I believe he gets new pink and tops every season,' continued the Philosopher with an air of contempt. 'He is a relation of the Passions too, but of another branch of the family, and has no more of the sportsman about him than a squirt of rose-water. Ah! there comes the Master, do you see him? His name is Mind.' Yes, I saw him; he looked and rode as became a M.F.H., and was mounted, as he should be mounted, on a brown thoroughbred combining such blood, bone and beauty as only the highest strains of English descent can show, and such manners and temper as only come out of the best of stables. By his side rode his little girl, out with the hounds for the first time to-day, on one of those clever New Forest ponies that even high-class hunters find it hard to beat. 'What is the young lady's name, Philosopher?' 'Miss Wilhelmina, I believe,' he replied, 'but I'm afraid her friends only call her Will.' The old coachman, Experience, followed, riding Estimative, a wonderfully knowing horse that had seen some sixteen seasons in this country; he was to be in charge of Miss Wilhelmina.

'Good morning, Heaviside,' said Philosopher benignly, as we passed a picture of an old farmer on a rakish-looking colt. 'What is your mount to-day?' 'Memory, sir,' chuckled the old farmer with a wink. 'I'm a-breaking of him for the Master, for the use of his young Master at college; he's a rare one to jump the places he's been over before.' 'Good point that,' said the Philosopher carelessly, 'but it won't take him far with the hounds if he is afraid of new places.'

A foreign Count passed us at a hand gallop, to the Philosopher's great amusement. He was in full military uniform, with some marvellous wind instrument coiled round his body on which apparently he meant to perform when he came up with the fox; he had also a brace of great pistols (like the farrier of a Yeomanry troop) at the side of his saddle. 'That is Count Esterhazy,' said my friend, 'but as the natives can't pronounce his name they call him "Eccentricity"; he is thought to be a little wanting in balance.' 'What kind of balance, Philosopher?' 'All kinds of balance,' said the lover of wisdom dryly. 'There is our poet,' he continued with a laugh, 'that is Imagination.' Indeed he looked like a poet—a nineteenth-century poet, with a shock head of hair and a pensive absent countenance. He rode a graceful light-made horse named Asphodel, with rosettes of dead-leaf colour at his ears—it was by no means a hunting get-up!

One more sportsman, and I have done. This is the hunting parson, white haired, white faced, thin as a lath, resting his hunting crop on his hip with an easy air of being at home there, a strange iron-like ring in his voice, that seemed to me to come from preaching a fossil creed for many years to a bucolic congregation. They say that in his young days he would often slip the surplice over the pink, when he had to perform a rustic wedding, while the groom walked his horse about at the church-yard gate, and that the villagers would say that it was 'quite cheery-like to hear the clank of Parson's spurs on the church floor.' Now, however, he has given up the pink and hunts in black, but he is as keen a sportsman as ever. This morning he rode a weedy grey horse, not too safe on his forelegs it seemed to me. 'Well,' said the Philosopher genially, 'so you are out on Inconsistency again?' 'Yes,' said the Parson, 'he goes very well in *this* country, though he could not live in the shires.' 'What is his pedigree?' I ventured to ask, for the horse

had a curious false air of blood about him. 'Muscular Christian,' 'Tory Squire,' 'Queen Anne,' 'High and Dry,' by 'Church and State,' said the Parson in a satisfied tone, checking the animal as he stumbled over a drain; 'he has very often put me down when his forelegs give way, but I'm fond of him all the same. I hope we shall find early,' he added, 'for I have to be back at four to read the Commination service.' Now I, being a Catholic, did not know what the Commination service meant, but on inquiry from my encyclopædic friend I found that it was a series of curses which are directed to be read aloud from time to time by the established Clergy to their flocks for mutual edification and comfort. 'Is there a curse,' I asked, 'for the man who leads his neighbour into error?' 'No, my dear boy,' answered the Philosopher, 'it deals with what they call practical matters. Error is a detail.'

But here we are at the meet. Hodge Sense, a grinning rustic in a smock frock is telling Right Reason 'that he see'd Happiness an hour ago steal into Colonel Lovejoy's poultry yard,' and Right Reason is shaking his head dubiously. Sanction, the keeper, is explaining to Nat. Law how he has stopped all the earths this morning and given a poacher into custody for the Petty Sessions. At last the hounds are put into cover. There are some minutes of breathless suspense. Cool old hands venture to get down to let out their curb chain or look at their girths, nervous ones ride anxiously up and down. Mind is giving his little lady Will into the custody of Experience, the old coachman, who is proud of the charge; the rest are in silence.

All at once a piercing 'View-Hallo!' is heard at the far side of the Spinneys. 'Happiness, Happiness—Go-o-on-aw-a-a-a-y,' shouts Right Reason. The hounds stream out of cover with a deep musical note that stirs the very marrow of our bones. 'Stole awa-a-a-y,' echoes the first Whip again, cracking his long lash after a solitary

straggler. The Poet, in an ecstasy of delight, throws back his head to repeat the View-Hallo, puts his hand to his mouth and—utters a coo like a pigeon—at which old farmer Heaviside is taken with such a fit of laughter that he nearly rides over the straggling hound. Such a rush as it is ! that first five minutes from the covert-side, before the ardour of the Cockneys has been cooled. The ground seems to shake under the trampling of those many hundred hoofs. The horses, not yet steadied in their stride, are pulling double and plunge wildly at the first fence. Now we have cleared it, and let who can keep hold of his horse's head on the fair forty acres of grass. ' Gently, gentlemen, gently, don't ride the hounds,' says Right Reason entreatingly, as the Count, the Poet, and the Cockney almost plunge into the pack. The two latter rein in their mounts—but the Count thinks he has caught sight of the fox. He—yes—he will show the Englishmen the sport—he will kill—*le gibier* before the ' dogs ' have mutilated it—he will see that it is served for Miss Wilhelmina's supper to-night—and in a moment he has drawn one of the great pistols and stands up in the stirrups to steady his fire. What tragedy might have followed will never be known, if his horse had not, fortunately, put his foot in a water furrow and Count Eccentricity, as the natives call him, not being well balanced in his saddle, rolled on his back in the soft ploughed land, condemning in expressive terms the ways of English sport. ' Good riddance,' muttered Right Reason temperately ; ' can't get on with them Eccentrics, anyway.'

Oh ! this is something like hunting ; the scent breast high, the hounds running so that you could cover them with a table-cloth, the big bullfinches frowning at you, making you take your heart in both hands and trust to Providence for what may be at the other side, and the broad vale before without a covert within miles. The farmers have locked every gate in the line of course, so it means jumping in good earnest, and one by one the less

serious riders drop off. The Master keeps close to his hounds and Right Reason by his side. 'Forrard, forrard, forrard on,' he cries encouragingly, and the gallant pack quicken the pace, just too fast this time; they have overrun the scent and come to a check.

How these twenty minutes have weeded the field! The little lady is up, all honour to her and her pilot—so are old Heaviside and Mr. Golightly. The Parson too, and the Poet, will be able to pick up again, thanks to this check; the Philosopher and I have the good luck to be there, the rest are nowhere.

Right Reason takes a moment for circumspection, then rides carefully out among his hounds. Two or three casts are fruitless, Golightly looks impatient—then an old hound hits off the scent, a low musical whimper, the pack are on it, we are off again, the pace as great as before. It cannot last long now—we shall kill in the open undoubtedly, but who will be there when we come up with Happiness? Memory has refused a flight of hurdles, so poor old Heaviside is turned out. Imagination is struggling among the thick thorns, and the graceful Asphodel shows that he has had enough of it. The Parson has held his own gallantly, but Inconsistency cannot live over timber; a stern fence of syllogisms has brought him down, and the old sportsman rides home with a muddy back but ready to make all manner of kindly excuses for his old favourite.

Now comes the tug-of-war, the horses are getting blown and all in a lather. The hounds still running almost at view. Right Reason is standing up in his stirrups leaning right over his horse's neck. The Master's magnificent thoroughbred even is covered with foam, but spirit and temper as good as ever; the country grows stiffer for every fence we take; here looms the blackest of all; untrimmed thorns, strong with the growth of fifty years, not a gap anywhere, and the suspicion of a big ditch on the landing side. It is neck or nothing now,

the great crisis of the day. Right Reason shows the way, and, like the loyal servant that he is, turns to look for the Master. He holds up his hand, and we know that the landing must be dangerous, for Right Reason never gives sign for a trifle. What matter! the Master follows without moving a line in his saddle. Mr. Golightly comes next—the chestnut rushing madly at the fence. ‘Lady,’ cries Right Reason imperiously, as he sees little Miss Wilhelmina facing her pony at the obstacle. But Mr. Golightly has lost control of his fiery chestnut, who has chafed all day and now has the bit in his teeth; he cannot stop, and comes down as he deserves, a royal crash, and horse and rider roll over and cool themselves in the muddy ditch-water. ‘Will you take it, Missy?’ shouts old Experience, half frightened, ‘or will you go round?’ but the child’s courage is up and she does not even answer; shortening her reins in both steady little hands, she puts her pony resolutely at the big fence with a cut of the whip. He gives a wince and a snort and lays back his wicked ears, but a New Forest never knows when he is beaten: a splendid take off, an obstinate scramble, a few moments breathless suspense for those who looked on—it takes longer to write than to live through it—and pony and rider land safe over the formidable obstacle; a little paleness and a few honourable scratches are all the damage there is to show for such a brilliant beginning.

But the hounds have brought us to the finish now; a ‘who-whoop’ from the whips, a burst of music from the hounds. Right Reason dashes in, holds the quarry above their heads for a moment, then all is over. The well-won brush is fastened to the head of Miss Wilhelmina’s pony, two or three plaintive notes on the horn, and we turn our heads homewards.

They say that Mrs. Prim, the nurse, made a great fuss at that ‘nasty vermin’ being brought into the nursery, but Miss Wilhelmina declared that she would not sleep

unless the brush were fastened up over her little bed, and she had her way.

Now she was a lady much given to reflection, and the following day she asked her brother's tutor what was real happiness, for she knew that Happiness was only a pet name for a fox; and he, being properly brought up in the principles of the schools, answered that 'Happiness was the bringing of the soul to act according to the habit of the best and most perfect virtue of the speculative intellect, borne out by easy surroundings and enduring to length of days,' and pondering carefully upon these words she conceived the idea that she was only at the beginning of some great truth, and hearing her brother painfully translating, with many sighs, some words from St. Augustine that seemed to him incomprehensible, she noted them carefully. 'Oh, happy blessedness and blessed happiness, to see the Saints, to be with the Saints, to be as the Saints, to see God, to possess God for all Eternity and beyond it! This let us muse upon with all our understanding. This let us pant for with all our desires, and we shall soon be there. If you ask how this should be, by whose merit and with whose help? Listen. This matter is placed in the power of him who will do it, for the Kingdom of God suffereth violence. The Kingdom of Heaven, O man! asks no other price than thyself, it is worth to thee as much as thou art thyself. Give thyself and thou shalt have it. Why dost thou dispute about the price? Christ gave Himself that He might purchase for thee the Kingdom of His Father. Give thyself, therefore, that thou mayest be His Kingdom, that sin may not reign in thy mortal body, but the life-giving Spirit.'

THE HARVEST OF A QUIET EYE

It is the title of an old book. Perhaps there is more in the title than there is in the book, as sometimes happens.

It opens three distinct trains of thought :

(1) An unquiet eye. (2) A quiet eye. (3) The harvest of a quiet eye.

1. An unquiet eye, it is suggested, gathers no harvest ; why not ? since the harvest is for all.

There is another question to answer first, which will solve the second. What makes an unquiet eye ? Here we shall all agree. Passion makes the eye unquiet. How so ? Because passion makes it intent upon one thing, to the exclusion of others ; makes it intent upon its own object, the object of its love, its fear, its hatred, its desire, its aversion. Now from one object you can reap no harvest, therefore there is no harvest for the unquiet eye. Let us go into details. The scholastics tell us that in the things of sense, too strong an impression corrupts the sense—if you have looked long and fixedly at scarlet, you cannot distinguish between two delicate shades of grey or brown, therefore all beauties in grey or brown (and there are many), are lost to you—they belong to the harvest of a quiet eye.

Again, if you are made restless by the desire always to see something *new*, if *old* and familiar things pall upon you, then you travel through at express speed, and watch the others reaping the harvest ; but the harvest is not for you.

So if your eye is morbid and prejudiced, it sees itself and its own thoughts reflected in everything, but self is

not a harvest ; who would be content with such a reaping, though it is a certain one ? ‘ If thou seek thyself, without doubt thou shalt find thyself,’ says the *Imitation*. ‘ *Absit*,’ says the Apostle. God forbid that self should be my harvest !

Let us leave the unquiet eye with the observation of Father Lancisius : ‘ Reflect and amend ’ if your eye *is* unquiet and if you wish to reap a harvest.

2. The quiet eye.

As the ideal portrait of a quiet eye, see St. Thomas on the *bon esprit*. Therefore the quiet eye is :

Open and receptive, that it may see ; the eye of the disciple.

Contemplative, that it may reflect.

Reasonable, that it may compare and judge.

Docile, that it may be corrected.

Always open, always contemplative, always docile, always reasonable ; that means always *even*, and not at the mercy of a sudden gust of impressions, ‘ immoderate sadness or inept joy,’ as Louis de Blois has it ; or of a thunderstorm of conflicting passions, or a blight of discouragement and inaction.

So much for a quiet eye, although the half is not told.

3. Now for the harvest of a quiet eye.

The quiet eye has its sowing time, its growing time, its ripening time, its harvest time. The corn is not cut and carried until it is ripe. That is to say, the harvest is not for childhood or early youth. ‘ The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, patiently bearing till he receive the early and the latter rain.’

Sowing time is the time for observation. ‘ He that hath ears to hear, let him hear ’ ; one might add, he that hath eyes to see, let him see. Yet the *Imitation* asks, ‘ What dost thou here standing looking about, since this is not the place of thy rest ? ’ The scholastics would answer as usual, ‘ I distinguish.’ I distinguish between *looking* and *looking about*, the latter is aimless, idle, in

search of enjoyment—the former is deliberate, attentive, and done for an end. One stores the mind, the other dissipates it. Look then if you wish to reap a harvest, but look thoughtfully, patiently, watchfully, and know why you look.

Growing time is the time of reflection, the seed is sown, the facts are stored in the mind. Now they germinate and spring up, a wealth of them sometimes, when the young mind awakes and feels its growing power, thought, theory and bold soaring speculation, which it is tempted to take for the ‘vision of the latter days.’ And the Master looks on and smiles, not unkindly, at all this, but says ‘Wait.’

Ripening time comes, correcting time; what was watery and weak in the young plants shrivels instead of ripening. ‘The words of the Lord are fire-tried’ and the sun of truth is a great searcher of hearts. Let them go, all your favourite thoughts, they will not stand this searching and ripening of correction and of truth, they are not worth keeping, and they are not of your harvest.

The reaping time comes at last. What is the harvest? The fruit of years of thought and labour and observation; it is something that cannot be bought for the wealth of Ethiopia or Saba; a precious oil which a wise virgin cannot impart to a foolish one; something which compensates for the absence of almost any other quality of mind, while nothing else can make compensation for it; the harvest is *experience*.

ON A THOUGHT THAT HAS STRUCK ME DURING THE YEAR

It can only be an *embarras du choix* when we are asked for a thought that has struck us during the year. If we were told to keep note of a thought that had struck us during the *day*, and this order were renewed daily for the year, we should very rarely be obliged to make the melancholy entry, 'a blank day.'

This is one of the joys of community life. The strongest, the sweetest, the most intimate thoughts of others are often flashed upon us unconsciously or trustfully put into our hands, and we go away richer in mind and heart, 'wondering in ourselves at that which has come to pass' in these fleeting apparitions of Our Lord.

I know this has also its comic side, when, as N. says, 'you bring out your poor little thought, and all the microscopes of the community are turned upon it in the same minute,' but we can brave that for the sake of the eyes that look through the microscope, 'alive, alert, immortal,' and bringing light as often as they ask for it. It is a greater ordeal when they come out with their spectroscopes, and our simple little ray of white light is broken up by spectral analysis into seven distinct coloured bands, each of which we must account for, though we never suspected its presence in the original light.

But here is my choice among the thoughts of the year. It came from the driest possible source, Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*. A paralysing title, by the way; think of aids to respiration read aloud, as a painless method of asphyxiating criminals; the effect would be somewhat

similar, for you can only truly reflect when you do not reflect that you reflect, and so on.

'Truths of all others the most awful and interesting are too often considered as so true that they lose all the power of truth and lie bedridden in the dormitory of the soul side by side with the most despised and exploded errors.'

This is dry, but it sets one thinking. Where do all our harvest of thoughts go to? Where are they stored? Where do they live? Where do they die? What becomes of them?

I visited six chambers in my own mind where these thoughts are distributed. It may be that others will find many more, indeed we know without allowing ourselves any personal allusions that there are certain labyrinth minds, in whose mazes we scarcely trust our favourite thoughts for fear of losing them altogether.

First then, guided by Coleridge, I visited the interior crypt, cemetery or dormitory, since they are all much the same. In this catacomb or columbarium or dormitory I found all the 'dear departed' thoughts ranged in their cells, identification being only possible by their inscriptions. 'Little angel' thoughts, that died after two months' existence, during which I cherished them. I can smile over their graves. *Valete!* They were not 'life thoughts.' *There* is the cell of the thought that was to have made a saint of me, it seemed so full, so strong, as if I could never exhaust it. Yet it 'wearied with the march of life,' and I had to bury it by the wayside. R.I.P. Or perhaps it will make a saint of some one else, it was not meant for me.

Beyond it is the cell where rests the thought that died suddenly. A lightning flash of truth shrivelled it up. Let it rest and do not regret it.

There are graves of orphan thoughts that died from neglect, but this is sad to touch upon, only as the wise people say, let us 'call the attention of the authorities to

the melancholy circumstance that a recurrence may be guarded against,' and let us leave the crypt.

The second chamber is the museum, a sort of haunted place, between the dead and the living, the storehouse of all the curious thoughts, the original thoughts, the 'happy thoughts,' the singular suggestions, the thoughts that we wonder at for their origin, for their expression, for their first and last end, the far-fetched thoughts brought from the very Arctic regions by some intellectual Duke of Abruzzi. Here are set the stuffed lions we have received from the 'wicked world' outside, the 'mental savage Africa'; the prehistoric mammoth of thought that was too big for me, so that I had to present it to the museum because I could not live with it; the reflections of primeval man that no one ever utters aloud in real earnest; the savage weapons and ornaments torn from wild thoughts that I met in the woods; shells and gems from all parts of the world that kind friends have sent to me. All these are in the museum, endless food for thought, and thoughtful talk with those kind friends, and the museum is a place where I can spend many a happy and useful hour; but these are curiosities only.

The third chamber is the forge, where the inner blacksmith works in the glow of his furnace, and in the sweat of his brow, beating out the hot thoughts upon his anvil; sometimes he is beating the swords into ploughshares, and the spears into spades, and sometimes the order is reversed, and he beats the ploughshares into swords, and the spades into spears, having considered 'that God hates the peace of those He destines for war.' Both in peace and war he hammers out his horseshoes with ringing blows on the anvil, horseshoes of unanswerable thoughts, each complete in itself: *Quid hoc ad æternitatem? Tempus fugit, cœlestia quaere. Memento mori*, and so on.

I like the blacksmith's forge. Here the will comes in search of strong thoughts with which to fight. There is

sweetness elsewhere for the will, but here is only strength, so let us go there for ourselves ; but when we want something for others, let us go where sweetness and strength are joined, to the fourth chamber, the goldsmith's workshop, where thoughts of price are fused and beaten and chased into things of beauty. Historic gold-work was wrought here, the shield of Achilles, the ring of the Fisherman, the golden rose, all fruit of goldsmith's thought as well as goldsmith's craft. The golden words of the Poets are here, and the golden thoughts of the Saints. All thoughts that are both good and beautiful, the 'altogether lovely' thoughts that have made the riches of our race, are stored here. It is well to spend hours with our goldsmith, and to bring from his workshop treasures new and old, according to our wealth, for the use and delight of others.

Next to the goldsmith's workshop is the library of the mind. Here all that is purest truth is gathered together ; not strength, not sweetness, but truth ; white, colourless, passionless, enlightening truth, certain, positive, pure, luminous. Truth repellant to the foolish, the vain, and the insincere ; attractive beyond resistance to the clear in mind and the pure of heart. Let us call it the library, for truth is often stored in books, but in reality the treasures of truth are diamonds of thought, hard, brilliant, cutting pitilessly through all that is baser, glorying in the light and glorifying it. Not every spirit knows their value, not even every *learned scribe*, but blessed are they that know it—'He that readeth, let him understand.'

There is another chamber in the mind, which, repulsive as it is to some, is to me full of venerable and valuable stores. This is the *office* of the mind, the home of all practical thoughts that make the machinery of 'this lower world of ours' move on. It smells of leather-backed ledgers, it is spotted with ink, and scattered over with samples, things of use, but scant in beauty. Here

are treated questions of insurance and rent, of rates and taxes, of stocks and shares, of pipes and chimneys, of top-dressings and subsoils, of cattle and farm implements, of crops and cartage, of 'cost' and 'come to' and so forth. This is the home of abnegation, where reside those who are willing to treat of these things, and able to deal with them, and so they set others free to attend to stellar parallax and spectral analysis, the four last things and the degrees of mystical union.

All honour to them. All honour to those most necessary thoughts that make no show, nourish no pride, but call out all that is best of patience, abnegation and charity; yes, all honour to the thoughts of the office.

But there are thoughts that will not go into any of these chambers, that are beyond the carving and the beating and the forging of the workshops, thoughts that have within them another life of their own. These are the thoughts of the supernatural order that transcend all the limits and the fetters, and the labels and the bottles, and the pigeon-holes of the 'Professors dry-as-dust.'

A little living act of faith or hope or charity, escaping even from the trammels of words, a little leaning of my spirit on God, that carries it out and beyond itself to Him. These are like the flowers in the crannied wall of which Tennyson's little lines might have been spoken, and then his 'higher Pantheism' and his 'Flower in the crannied wall' would be Christian truth.

'Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies;
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower, but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.'

COLOUR

WE are all familiar with the common teaching and experiments on light, undertaken by the branches of the Education Department, for the enlightenment of the nation. The death of this department, let us bear in mind, is announced for December 31,¹ and it would be becoming to shed over it an educational tear, or, 'here fetch a sigh,' according to the instructions of the German spiritual author. But this is impossible. Departments have no feelings and cannot be hurt at our insensibility. They are not always 'lovely and pleasant in their lives,' so their death is the less bemoaned. Besides, they are likely to revive in altered, and possibly not improved form. 'What a terrible thought is that of the resurrection!' as the nephew was heard to murmur at the aunt's funeral.

But in the absence of departmental control, we may hazard some considerations on colour that would not bear investigation at South Kensington. To express it in the customary formula :

'For my composition of place I will consider myself as a dispersed ray of light.'

Then follow the usual considerations. Who? What? Why?

Who? I.

What? A ray of sunlight, dispersed through a prism into seven bands of monochromatic light.

How? In the seven stages of seven years that will have composed my life when I reach the golden-jubilee year of fifty.

¹ Written in 1899.

Why? That I may consider their colour.

1. Remember what you were at *no* years old and from thence to seven years old. Life was in its primitive and most elementary form. Its rays were very slightly refrangible, its colour bright red. Life was gaudy. Your soul was of course in the first grace of its baptism, but your character! your temperament! Putting out of your mind those infant saints, who fasted at six months old and were advanced contemplatives at three, the average Christian baby is in a state like the babyhood of nations, nomadic, barbarous, predatory, rapacious, warlike, struggling for existence, conscious that 'I am I' and of very little besides; an existence that when seen in later light appears to have been mostly *prose*. This may be an unfair and prejudiced judgment, a misinterpretation; I am no connoisseur of babies, and am open to conviction. I am only speaking of the natural order and maintain that baby life is bright red.

2. Things better themselves considerably as we approach the seventh year and a tinge of orange mingles in our red, something of promise, something of vision, something a little wider than the interior *Heimathskunde* of our inner life before the age of reason. But why *orange*? Because it has a little more refrangibility, a little more 'sweet reasonableness,' a little more Christianity in its warfare. If babyhood is barbarism, these are the years of young Christianity, such Christianity as that of Clovis and his convert Franks, or Charles Martel, the 'Hammer'; a Christianity without modifications, or shades of tone, or 'allowances.' We loved or we hated, we blessed or we anathematised, we were good or bad, and other people were good or bad, all one or all the other, either hot or cold, but never tepid. We loved the positive, the individual. We were suspicious of generalities, scornful of abstractions, doubtful of first principles, credulous, superstitious, variable as weathercocks, and with all that, in our own way, dogged, narrow, Philistine.

3. But a better time is coming. From fourteen to twenty-one is the wonderland of our life, the age of our mysticism, the years of ideals. We are then the discoverers of our own lives. Our world is new every day. Either we are sailing towards new shores, daring mariners in search of the unknown, and day by day the horizon dips lower and our stars rise higher ; or we are explorers by land, and new wonders reveal themselves on each day's march. Some of us go by sea and others by land all through our lives. We do not love the glories of those years less, now that we can look back and see that some of them were clouds and some were mirages of the desert. They did their work and they were the band of yellow, clear gold in our lives. We would not have been without a day of them. In these years each morning brought its message ' Onward,' each evening asked ' Whither ? ' and the morning answered ' Onward again.'

4. But ' onward ' means change, and our coming of age brings us up with a shock against the *real*. Wonderland is earth, and earth is green, and questioning becomes imperious for an answer, and we know that ' Whither ? ' ought to be changed for ' Where ? ' and that the ideal must take shape and show itself forth as something that *is*. And we want, above all things, to *do* and not only to discover, to stamp the mark of our individuality on *something*. These are our *humanist* years, exuberant in action, and still glowing with the imagery of our golden age. Years when we are gathering experience and learning the inexorable conclusions of our incircumspect premises. Little by little we draw nearer to a graver time.

5. From twenty-eight to thirty-five, the cool, clear blue age of Dialectics.

' Drive well, O mind ! use all thy art,
Thou charioteer ! O feeling heart,
Be thou a bridle, firm and strong,
For the Lord rideth and the way is long.'

Reason is taking the mastery in us. We are not pessimists from twenty-eight to thirty-five, but neither are we optimists. We have set our faces to that which *is*, not to that which might, could, should, or would be—if? We are beginning to know, not to guess; to judge, not to *feel* the answers to our questions. It is our scholastic age, and these are critical years in our formation. For if Dialectics go too far, and the mind, instead of broadening and sinking down on its base in the *real*, grinds itself to a knife-edge; if we learn to cut and dissect our ideals and those of others; if wary reason stops and sounds too dubiously the chasms over which feeling and imagination used to carry us in one flight, then the riper and richer years of our life are dwarfed. We shall in future be of value to the library or the museum, but not to *life*.

6. Thirty-five to forty-two. Years of indigo hue. *Quam sordet tellus!* God's stars stand out upon an indigo, not upon a black sky. If our dialectic years have turned it black, we have made for ourselves a painted sky and painted stars, but if they have only given depth to our blue, then we have the age of true asceticism, deep, responsible, austere, keen-eyed, daring in thought and strong in act, greatly illuminated from heaven.

7. From forty-two to forty-nine. The seventh stage is the band of violet, the most refrangible of all rays, the last band of monochromatic light, the time when you finally *are what you are*. Why have so many been found to sing the glories of youth and the praises of old age? and so few to speak of the graces of middle life? Perhaps youth and age have more to say for themselves and more freedom in saying it. Perhaps it is good to keep silence on what no one can know until they reach it.

And yet for once it might be well to speak, and say that it is a stage, which those who have reached would not exchange against anything that has gone before. Now that life consists more of answers than of questions,

more of appreciation than of criticism, more of the fruit than the flower, more room in the retrospect, more of the vision of the end. . . .

For fifty, the golden year, is coming, and after that we shall have not coloured but white light, complete, unbroken, collected, the very light of eternity. The rainbow colours were round about the throne that St. John saw in his apocalyptic vision, but He that sat thereon was clothed in white, His countenance was 'white as the light,' because it was the light itself.

DISCONNECTED THOUGHTS ON PLATITUDES

PLATITUDES : They are as their name itself announces, dwellers on the flat, 'of the flat, flatty,' without height, without depth, without poetry, without wisdom. But the young logician takes us up sharply thus : 'All platitudes are dwellers on the flat, but all dwellers on the flat are not platitudes.' True. And in the presence of the young logician let us above all try to be exact. Therefore : What is a platitude ?

A platitude is a somewhat pretentious enunciation of a well-known principle or fact, as though it threw new light upon the question or situation under discussion. It is generally rather vaguely expressed. Let us distinguish further and note varieties of platitudes.

A platitude is not produced by frequent repetition of a truth. This, if it be a minor or incomplete truth, produces a truism ; if it be a major truth, completely and pointedly uttered, it gives us an aphorism, an axiom, a maxim, but never a platitude. Thus it is a truism to say that 'you cannot burn the candle at both ends,' that 'the burnt child dreads the fire,' but it is not a platitude. If we say that 'art is long but life is short,' that 'two straight lines can never meet more than once,' that 'the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong' in spiritual things, that 'God is all and everything else is nothing,' you have axioms or maxims, but not platitudes.

There are three kinds of platitudes :—

The simple platitude, which is the hollow resonance of an empty mind trying to appear full. This platitude

is the conversational refuge of the thoughtless and the superficial. 'Samson was a very strong man!' said Lady Platitude, anxious to make a pious remark to the late Bishop of Cashel. 'Yes, ma'am, but you are stronger,' replied the Bishop, 'for you have dragged him in by the hair of the head.'

The compound platitude, which has two ends—to shield myself and not offend you. This is the platitude of the timid and the cautious. 'Well! that is a baby!' said the American prelate, thus masking his own ignorance, flattering the hypersensitive mother, and throwing dust into the eyes of the connoisseur.

The complex platitude, to attain several ends—asserting one's importance; seeming to know 'the inwardness of things'; forming a 'school of thought' whose education consists in sonorous phrases, whose disciples are taken for a cheap pension and no extras. This is the platitude of the worldly. Politicians of meagre talent and fluid principles indulge much in these platitudes. Here is a complex platitude chosen from the utterances of 'Imperial Perks,' the Nonconformist M.P.: 'Our foreign policy ought to be one blended of conciliation and firmness, with a steadfast maintenance of our own claims and due consideration for the rights of other nations.' This is faultless as far as it goes, but . . . an absolute platitude.

The worst of all platitudes is the pious platitude, whether simple, compound, or complex: '*Corruptio optimi pessima*.'

'Vacant chaff well meant for grain,' Tennyson plaintively sings of the condolences that reached him after Arthur Hallam's death.

'Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled,' St. James makes his worldling cuttingly say to the 'poor relation.' There are spiritual poor relations whose difficulties for food and warmth are just as pressing. 'What man is there among you,' says Our Lord, 'of whom, if his son

shall ask bread, will he reach him a stone?' Who is there of us, from whom bread might be asked to satisfy soul-hunger, and who would offer a platitude?

Where do platitudes originate?

Platitudes are not 'true sorts,' to use a gardener's phrase, but hybrids that grow in a particular class of mind.

Roughly speaking, there are three classes of mind.

1. The rural mind, which has its solitudes of original thought, its mountains and valleys, its oceans and lakes and rivers; a mind that is calm, silent, naturally contemplative, slow to utter itself, but the utterances have a morning sweetness or an evening maturity, or a steady midday radiance that is all their own. It may utter itself in poetry or prose, it can respond to the moods and tenses of other minds leisurely, sympathetically, intuitively. But in response to everything it remains *itself*, self-poised, undisturbed and free. This mind may utter anything you like except a platitude.

2. There is the city mind (pardon the word for want of better), the city mind vibrating with its own life, and the life of the human race; eager, searching, unconventional, progressive. Think of the faces you see by hundreds under tall hats in the City, about the Bank of England and the Exchange at 1 P.M., and you will get a suggestion of the city mind. Think of the fixed eyes, and tense features, eyes that look straight before them, seeing nothing, for their gaze is within, features worn to wires by the interior pressure. Shall you hear platitudes from these? No; a platitude expires under pressure, and pressure is the element of the city mind. You will get facts, stripped of all their accessories to their severest elements; views chiselled to the hardest, smoothest surface; thoughts ground to a knife-edge, but never a platitude.

3. Thirdly, there is the true home of the platitude, the suburban mind. Solitude and pressure are equally

far removed from it. Originality is choked by its villas, pressure is kept off by its efforts to be rustic. Its milkman, its butcher, its baker are all platitudes. These officials abound in suburban districts. They are *always* there. They suggest the most prosaic side of domestic life, without its joys, its sorrows or its heroisms. This is where the platitude is at home, where it luxuriates until it chokes you. You long for either town or country, for in suburban surroundings you aim at both and have neither; whereas the most pressed city mind may have its glorious moments of solitude; the most solitary mind its moments of intense superhuman pressure—(take St. Paul, who knew the heights and depths of both),—and aiming at neither possesses both.

The use of the platitude :

Platitudes are not useless, they have an important function, active and passive, in conversational diagnosis. Passive, for we learn to know people, suburbans, by their platitudes. 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.' Active, for a platitude serves as our troops would say to 'draw the enemy's fire' and unmask their batteries. In fact, a platitude is often a conversational opening by which you feel the way to know your new acquaintance. Utter a platitude and watch the effect.

The city mind leaps at your throat and almost strangles you.

The rural mind looks beyond it, above it, beneath it, on each side of it, through it, every way except *at* it, and leaves you and your platitude high and dry together.

The suburban mind shakes hands with it, kisses it, small-talks to it, makes a fast friend and a confidant of it at once.

And thus you have your diagnosis.

Besides, we must not say too much against platitudes, they have their honoured place in the world.

Longfellow, dear Longfellow, sometimes utters them.

Cowper and Dr. Watts live in them.

Mendelssohn plays them from time to time.

Carlo Dolce paints them.

Father Faber saves souls by them.

Truly we have platitudes always with us, but do not let us add unnecessarily to their number.

THE PICTURESQUE AND THE CLEAN. FROM PELLEGRINA—ABSENT—TO THEOPHILA

ALMOST at the end of my wanderings, Theophila, about to lay aside the 'cockle-hat and staff' and the 'sandal shoon' of the journey, some thoughts occur to my mind, which, being out of proportion for an ordinary letter, are yet perhaps worth recording and reserving for a moment of leisure—*your* leisure, Theophila! though truly that is a word that makes one smile.

It became an obligation, towards the end of my journey, to take account, by strict self-examination, of the various duties I had done, or half done, or left undone, or given to others to do, or committed to the ground of my inner cemetery, in hopes of a happy resurrection, and to be done hereafter. In this self-examination, which the Psalmist not inaptly compares to the work of the broom, when he says, 'I swept out my spirit'¹—'*scopebam spiritum meum*'—amid a cloud of dust, the débris of various duties, which I carried off with damp tea-leaves of regret, there was found in the dust-pan a paper which reminded me of a neglected duty. '*Never*,' said my inward self-reproach, '*never* did you set before Theophila the sum of your reflections concerning the Picturesque and the Clean, while she on her part, spinning and weaving night and day among her maidens, clothing the household in double garments, one for the mind and one for the body, and bringing them bread from afar, like the merchant ship, bread from the bakehouse, and bread from the library shelves,—she has put you to shame.'

¹ Douay rendering of Psalm lxxvi. 7

'Too late,' I sighed, 'bring me yet another tea-leaf to sweep up this fault, it is too late for anything but regret.' Yet a better voice made itself heard within. 'Better,' said the voice, 'is the fault acknowledged and repaired than the fault merely regretted; the living dog is better than the dead lion; better to live repentant than to die of shame. Write to Theophila, if not the sum, at least the summary of your reflections.' After this preamble, Theophila, listen to the summary of my thoughts.

1. Is there peace or war between the picturesque and the clean? 'Is there peace, Jehu?' 'What peace?' said the furious driver, 'so long as, etc., etc.'¹ Is it hopeless war? irreconcilable, racial, religious war? I think *not*, Theophila; rather a painful misunderstanding than war, a sort of 'boundary question' like that which is in arbitration between Chili and the Argentine. You distrust the word 'misunderstanding,' Theophila? *so do I*, yet allow it for the moment. When the two are at variance, the picturesque appears to the clean as inappropriate, lawless, unreasonable, reckless, incomprehensible; and the clean appears to the picturesque as aggressive, dictatorial, narrow, prejudiced, hyper-scrutinising. Neither can tolerate the other, but this is when they meet on ground that is not common to both, where each looks on the other as an invader, as, perhaps, it truly is. There are certain territories where they are at perpetual war, and others where they can live in peace.

To be more explicit. In youth I believe, Theophila, that there must be war, peace comes with age. In earliest youth, put all the curls you wish on the little head, colour it with the fairness of the North or the riches of the South, yet if it is spotlessly, irreproachably clean, if you would call the nurse 'a superior person' and the nursery-maid 'an admirable under-servant,' you may call the child

¹ 4 Kings ix. 20 and 22.

'radiant,' 'beautiful' or 'lovely,' but you will not say 'picturesque.' Let the same child appear as 'merit in rags,' and 'picturesque' is the first word that will spring to your lips. Think of one of Murillo's beggar boys, and one of Sir Joshua's dainty *demoiselles*, and you have the type of each. Nurse calls him 'a horrid dirty little beggar boy,' and snatches away Mademoiselle, because nurse is all for the clean. The artist will be dragged both ways, but, unless he be Sir Joshua, will probably paint the beggar. 'Immortalise the picturesque,' he will say, 'the clean can take care of itself.' Yes, the clean *can* take care of itself, and it must take care of itself. *L'abandon* is not its spiritual way.

In late youth the divergence is even more marked. To the clean, that which is *soigné*, brilliant, sportsmanlike, choice, distinguished (ah! yes, but their portion is also the faddy, the anxious, the German-water-curey, the hypochondriacal!). To the picturesque, that which is rare, inspired, rapt, poetic. To the picturesque, the land of Vision—(yes, but for pity's sake, Theophila, keep them out of the Catholic School Committee, and don't let them loose in Parliament). But when they grow old, and the picturesque has dreamt its dreams out, and the clean has had some sharp falls—has 'bought land,' as we say when we see the stiff clay smitten into the sportsman's shoulders, has 'bought experience,' as we say in things of greater worth—then, at last, they can make it up. The aged prophet, the seer, the lawgiver, blends many things in one that have been antagonistic in young and middle life. He has the strength of judgment that more than ever masters our mind, with the physical weakness that gives back the charm of childhood's dependence and makes it a joy to serve the old. It is the very moment when such service can be graciously accepted, Theophila, that old age reaches its loveliness. So when the hair is whitened, the carriage a little less erect, the voice a little less sonorous, then, while losing

nothing of its own, the clean can super-add the picturesque and you find venerable, sweet and cultured old age.

And so in other things. The sharp, clear, architectural lines of the newly finished temple are clean, not picturesque. Give them the weathering of a few centuries, they have not lost the clean—(no, Theophila, I am not speaking of London, but of Greece or Rome),—but they have been coloured and clothed with the picturesque.

But can the picturesque in old age super-add the clean, as the clean can super-add the picturesque? I fear not, Theophila, at least no instance of it comes to my mind, but then you know, rapt in vision, the picturesque often saves the situation by dying young!

Again, the picturesque and the clean do not war against each other at a distance, only when brought into the foreground and narrowly examined. The clean, generally speaking, is only perceptible when close at hand. It bears and even courts inspection and analysis. I know you are thinking of London again, Theophila, but in the distance, even London smoke is haze, colour, veiling, mystery, it is not dirt until you can lay your finger on it and bring it home as black dust to the senses of the inhabitants. The clean deals in the particular and the part, the picturesque in general effects. That is why the excess of the one is over-particularity and of the other negligence of detail.

2. This brings me to my second thought, Theophila. We can, we may, we ought, nay, we *must* strive for the clean. We *cannot*, *may* not, *ought* not, *must* not strive for the picturesque: *Nascitur non fit*. The picturesque striven for is the picturesque destroyed. You cannot prepare for it nor *organise* it. You see it, feel it, know it is there; and it is there *or it is not* there. There are no portions or sections of it. It is entire or not at all. But the clean! Oh! think of it, Theophila, washing day, starching day, bleaching day, spring cleaning; the

whole series of thoughts brings to our mind effort, organisation, intelligent labour. Our warfare in *this* is indeed against flesh and blood. Ask Mother M., Theophila, let her tell her experiences, and say whether her life is not a daily conflict for the clean, and what she would think of a school in which rather the picturesque was cultivated in details of dress, and vestry organisation! '*Ces dames Novices me font bien assez de charades,*' sighed Sister C. with her hands full of crockery chips. The third division with its vivid personalities, exuberant movements, and opulent vitalities, gives X already more than enough of the picturesque.

Enough, Theophila; put the two face to face, let them fight it out in presence of the community. Take a typical pair, let them consider the respective duties of the picturesque and the clean, to bear with one another, not to attack but rather to favour one another, to understand each other, to aim at each other as far as each can be aimed at, but if the aim is successful, to meet, not with the shock of lance thrusts, but with a religious embrace!

Poor and disconnected as these thoughts are, Theophila, I submit them for your consideration—and with all dutiful feelings towards those that are clean, and all affectionate weakness for such as are picturesque, I am, as ever, Your returning,

PELLEGRINA.

*Written on the journey back from South America.*¹

¹ See *Life and Letters of Janet E. Stuart*, by Maud Monahan (Longmans, Green and Co., 1922).

INFORMAL THOUGHTS ON EXPRESSION

(*Not a Prize Essay*)

THE tendency of our age is to self-analysis, and even to a morbid and inordinate craving for self-knowledge. We have gone many miles since it was written that the 'proper study of mankind is man.' We now think that the proper study of mankind is *self*. We photograph it, project it, paint it, write about it, we finger its pulse to test the degree of its emotion, and keep the thermometer under its tongue to register the intensity of its feelings. Only the healthier minds refrain from dissecting it without stopping to get an order for a *post mortem*.

But with all this analysis, I believe we know less about self, and certainly less about others, than if, with quiet temper and free mind, we—whole and entire—took self,—whole and entire,—and dealt with it in a manner best proportioned to its real position in the world.

We are in a phase of reaction against crude objectivism,—soon the pendulum will swing back, there are already indications that it is doing so. Or perhaps we are like inexperienced divers in deep water, nearing the bottom of the plunge, and hoping that our breath will hold out until we come up again.

The breathlessness and morbidness are the symptoms that make us anxious about what the medical officer would call 'the case,' as to whether the patient can pull through or not. But as we are in the thick of the epidemic ourselves, it is for us to see how we can improve the sanitary conditions of things.

How shall we restore the morbid, introspective eye to

its normal usefulness. Let us try an old-fashioned, simple remedy, 'air and exercise,' no treatment, no diet, no surgical operations, but let it have fair play out of its own doors, and reasonable use. Put away the spectacles and microscope, and all the optical instruments, and then 'a-hunting we go,' observing those around us instead of chemically analysing ourselves indoors.

At this juncture a prize essay was proposed on '*Expression*,' but I had to give the prize, so I could not compete for it, but must write in the interests of truth alone. Therefore, in taking air and exercise I set out on an observing expedition in search of expression.

I sought it first on the faces I knew least, that I might disengage my mind from what I knew to be there, lest I should fancy that I saw it. But I found that each face was a palimpsest, and bore three if not four manuscripts, written one over the other.

First, the type, the racial story, written ineffaceably on the parchment. This is where we read the instincts; the affinity to fire or clay, to the god or to the beast, and this is the expression of the whole head, and answers to the question: 'What art thou?'

Secondly, the temperament, the story of destiny. Born to command or to obey, born to give or to receive, to carry or to be carried. Born, in short, to sing first or second in the great chorus of life. And this is expressed in the profile at rest, and answers to the question: 'What wouldst thou?'

Thirdly, the character written in eleven letters of passion on the features prepared by the temperament; and this is coming nearer to the true expression of the soul, for it is coming within the region of control. The eleven letters shape themselves into many words, and the soul of the one within often betrays itself by these utterances. But they are not its normal utterance; they are the expression of the soul suffering; suffering panic, depression, anger, or an invasion of joy which has routed

the guards, and threatened the control of the whole castle of the soul. And these are read in the full face in agitation, and answer to the question : ' What aileth thee ? '

Fourthly,—and this is the most intimate observation of all,—when the countenance is in repose and fully turned to the observer, unconscious of itself, and following its own thoughts, then comes the true expression, the impress of subtle personal quality through the features, the most intimate seal and what is most inward and special to the soul in thoughts and views and interior life. This is the very *Ego* showing itself ; the mind on the forehead, the thought in the eyes, the will in the mouth, the mood in the indefinable *something*, which you catch, but cannot hold ; and this answers to the question that we hardly dare ask one another : ' Who are you ? ' a question at which we sometimes make a hazardous guess, and seal our lips tight lest it should escape us before the time.

Our highest friendships are staked on these hazardous guesses and silent understandings. By these I mean the friendships that are all of admiration and live in the ideal, not the prosy give-and-take of good offices, still less those that are exacting of affection, but the friendship in which our best self calls out, and the ideal other answers. ' How timely then a comrade's song comes floating on the mountain air,' even though we should not be able to catch the words ; and we are raised higher by what we have seen, by what we have guessed, and by what, in glowing consciousness, we believe to be there. These high friendships are not limited to earth, we may have our friends among the saints, canonised or uncanonised, of the heavenly city. When our inner self has caught the expression of their countenance looking at us, and we know that we understand and are understood, then we may call them friends. They who have gone beyond the need of voice or spoken language can understand us better even than those with whom we hold converse here, and they bend so nobly and sweetly down to us, that

their gracious friendship, as all high friendships must do, lifts us above our own level and nearer to themselves.

Pardon this digression on friendship, I am not trying for the prize.

Expression in faces is only a very small part of our field of observation. There is expression in music and painting, expression in voice, in gesture, in writing, in a thousand human things. But there are dimmer and more hidden expressions in things that have no soul, and not every one can catch them. For instance, what is the expression of a landscape? Something that can be caught, but cannot be communicated. A Cockney critic said to a painter—was it Turner?—in face of one of his pictures that seemed to him exaggerated, ‘I never saw a sunset like that.’ ‘Don’t you wish you could see it?’ answered the painter grimly. The landscape is something inexpressive in itself, that catches a reflection from my thought, and throws back a subtle something to me, something that is partly *it* and partly *me*, and if you are standing by, it gives you back another subtle something that is partly *it* and partly *you*, and if you happen to be Turner, and I happen to be Hobbema, we shall talk altogether at cross-purposes if we try to make each other understand what we have seen. Which is another indication that we are hermit spirits.

And as I am not writing for the prize, which would demand unity of treatment in an essay, let me add a remark quite at a tangent. It was only on thinking it out, that I saw with some dismay, that the alternative essay proposed was only a collateral branch of the same subject, and an occult way of putting the question, ‘How do you catch the expression in words?’ And this is a most seriously compromising question, because it induces you to lay bare the pegs on which your favourite thoughts and theories are hung, and all the theories and thoughts may

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be hanging up on them at the time and thus exposed to view.

Having got so far I may as well finish the confession. Some of my favourite words are :

Strenuous, a deep-blue word, which expresses to me high pitch and well-conditioned energy, clear and lofty thoughts.

Patient, a violet-coloured word, in which beyond the precious central meaning, I see fringes of delicate beauty round the soul that is arrayed in the virtue of patience.

Serene, a word of clear cerulean blue, like a well-washed sky after a storm, or the majesty of death in old age.

Renaissance, the colour of the word is X's favourite alizarin crimson, and its expression that of abundant life, expectation and promise.

None of these words can leave me indifferent, but if I went on to those that are more intimate, I might as well make my direction aloud, and as no one would give me a prize for this, there is nothing to make it worth while.

THE CLOSED GARDEN

IT might be the heading of a meditation, the title of a book of devotion, the name of a picture with a number in an exhibition catalogue, the designation of a sermon by St. Bernard or—the description of your own soul.

Somebody wrote a romantic book on *My Lady's Garden*, with a good deal of nonsense in it, and another wrote a book on *A Surrey Garden*, with a good many dashes of sense across the nonsense. And this brings to my mind that gardeners are not usually taken seriously ; a man who spends his life on gardening is not generally considered a man of weight or purpose, unless, like Sir Joseph Paxton, he has risen from the ranks and sat down as a master-gardener among the princes of the people,—and annoyed the lay-folk of the craft by certain arbitrary changes in the nomenclature of cultivated plants. In that case he represents authority, professional skill, expert opinion, the right to be heard, and a certain little vexatious horticultural tyranny before which we bow rather stiffly. Otherwise a gardener is considered an amiable sort of dilettante, with elegant and expensive tastes, a member of a small and very select school of artists.

But is gardening an art ? I see you shudder already. You think you are going to be dragged over the harrows of an old controversy long worn threadbare, like the introduction to logic : ‘ Is logic a science or an art ? ’ Not at all. I only appeal to the verdict of your common sense when you look at the newest show chrysanthemum,

the last 'improved' carnation, the latest columbine which has no less than six doves drinking at its fountain. These are artistic productions of the gardener, are they not? Not *made*, but *educated* out of the simple forms of wild flowers—'for beauty and for glory,' and for delight.

But to return to the closed garden. What was it? *Unjardin potager*? the 'garden of pot herbs' of our great-grandmothers, or in our own phrase the kitchen garden? No, the kitchen garden is, like certain points in a meditation, 'good, desirable, becoming, necessary,' but it is not delightful, and the *raison d'être* of the closed garden is delight.

Therefore also it is not a market garden, for the end of the market garden is early produce; not even a nursery garden, for the end of the nursery garden is transplantation, neither of which are ends worthy of the 'closed garden.'

What then is the 'closed garden'? It is the enclosure within the enclosure, the very heart of the estate. The closed garden must not border upon the great thoroughfare, but be bounded on all sides by the freer parts of the domain. It borders on the slope of its own park, so that through its latticed gates you may see the deer browsing far away under the oaks; one of its side-doors opens into the plantations not far from the gamekeeper's cottage, and another side borders on the miniature lake where you flatter yourself that you will rear wild-fowl. Vain hope! for *one* comes out of the plantations by night, and shamelessly steals brood after brood, and rejoices in the evil, knowing that his sacred life is protected by law against all enemies,—except foxhounds. And the other wall has its side-door on a garden-path, the wild path of an English garden, silent and shady and secluded from all but those that have the entry of the 'closed garden.'

And the closed garden is for delight—delight of the Creator, delight of the owner, delight of the gardener,

delight of the few,—the *very* few, that on the invitation of the rarest friendship may tread its paths. Now do you understand ?

The closed garden is your own soul, of course—you saw that from the beginning. In the very heart of your heart, and soul of your soul, there is an enclosure wall, the closed garden. There is a great deal outside it that is worth visiting, and which you, if you are a philanthropist, throw open to the public on certain holidays, and we all go in and picnic under your trees, and rouse up your deer, and take delight in all the sights and sounds of the rich park land ; that is to say, when you throw open your holiday thoughts to us and let us see some of the bright imaginative live things that course through your head. In other times, of course, the park gates are shut, and the family is in town, when parliament is sitting and *you* are in your place in the House, demonstrating to an astonished audience how the Education Bill works out upon real live children ; that is what we call ‘ term time,’ and we know what it means !

And when, admitted by your genial philanthropy we wander round from the park into the plantations, we find your property still. That is where, sacred and retired, you preserve your foxes. We can guess at the glorious runs that there will be next season when some of these cherished cubs have grown to fox’s estate and break away from these secluded coverts, and the hunt streams across the vale and all of us are in the first flight with the hounds.

And this little lake with the water-fowl on it ? Ah ! those are the joys that *might have been*, if it had not been for the exigencies of fox-hunting ; the gentle joys of verse writing, and high-class sampler-making, backed on a leisurely classical culture and musical formation in good church tones, and desultory holy reading, and ideal leisure, and all those things that are considered conventional delights—things that might have been, but may

not be, because, as I said above, of the stern necessities of fox-hunting.

And that secluded, winding path, what of that? The wood pigeons call to each other across it and the jays chatter in the tops of the spruce, and your friends walk below and wonder what manner of closed garden may lie at the end of this walk where their feet fall so noiselessly on the fallen spruce needles or on the deep moss of the borders, for you are too large-hearted to say 'keep off the grass' here, as the Cockney proprietors do.

But the closed garden; who has the key of the closed garden? Nobody knows, except those who have it, and the one who gave it. And no one knows what lies within it. But we guess at that.

There is the sun-dial on which the silent, unerring needle marks the morning and the evening and the noon-day; and marks the hour when the Creator comes down and walks there with His creature, the hour of the morning sacrifice, or in the 'afternoon air,' which seems to have been from of old the hour for contemplation.

There are day-lilies growing there, holy, lovely thoughts, born of God, given for a day only, for delight and for a foreshadowing of what the lilies shall be that will never fade away.

And there are immortelles in the closed garden, thoughts that even now are everlasting, that time and age and change can never touch, bright enough to lay upon the holy graves of our dead.

And violets are there, great Czar violets, our 'prize essays' of humility, hidden away under their own leaves; we can only cultivate them in the most cloistered walks of our closed garden; and pansies, true *pensées*, grave and full, so broadly open, so deeply delightful to those that understand the beauty of pansies, and all other thoughtful flowers. Shade of Sir Joseph Paxton! their names are quite beyond you; St. Francis of Sales can tell us more about them than you can, *le serpolet et*

le thym qui croissent au pied et à l'ombre de l'arbre de la vie.

Perhaps the less said the better of all the rest of what is in the closed garden.

‘ He could not trust his melting soul
But in his Maker’s sight.’

And when we give the key, we give it in trust and trembling, only to those whom the Creator has sent to us, His commissioned gardeners, or near and trusted spiritual kinsmen that come from Him, or that rare friend, one in ten thousand, to whom we make, as Bacon says, a ‘ civil shrift ’ ; the one who knows us better than ourselves.

But you know there are other closed gardens, and the strange thing is that you can learn about them only inside your own.

There is the closed garden of our Blessed Lady, where the One Flower grew from the One Flower, the Rose from the Lily, the garden of the True Vine ; and that other closed garden on Olivet, of which the Lord and Owner offers us the key, and allows those who will make use of it to walk with Him therein amid the Olives and the Passion Flower.

ON THE PRACTICAL SPIRIT

I ASKED myself whether the subject was too hackneyed, whether it had been exhausted, but on reflection it seems worthy of a separate paper, for we have all an intimate persuasion that we have not reached the bottom of it. We remember the time when we looked into it together, and determined to become practical. We gazed intently at the practical spirit, we stretched ourselves beyond measure, we jumped ever so high, and we alighted with our feet almost in the same position as before. Nothing more was said about it for some time. Some became practically unpractical from aiming at the unattainable; others unpractically practical by aiming at something which was not to the point.

Perhaps there is a 'more excellent manner' if we could find it. We were determined then to begin with the concrete. Every one begins with the concrete now; it is the new educational fad. And perhaps it would be the royal way to become practical if we had scope and time to develop in that way, time to experiment, to burn our fingers, to expiate our awkwardness and our mistakes, to begin indefinitely over and over again,—in a word, two or three lives at our disposal, instead of the remains of one.

Our mistake was principally this,—that we mistook the material for the practical; and then we began anywhere, and not only outside, but *from the outside*; we rode gallantly forward without knowing where we were going,—and as they say in war, 'without any definite objective.' But now we are wiser. We recognise that the practical,

like the glory of the King's Daughter, 'sits in the inner chamber, backed against the wall.' The practical spirit rules from the inner court and is not necessarily seen in the streets. . . . Perhaps for once, as we are all grown up, as we are feeling the pressure of urgency, as we are most willing to be convinced, we might begin at the other end, and laying down what we think to be the idea of the practical spirit, consider how we may best develop it in the special conditions of our life. Shall we assume this—that it (the practical spirit) is '*Sound sense applied from the lowest to the highest things of life.*' It is not shown in learning to make puddings, or in icing cakes; it would not matter very much if cakes were never iced again by any one of us. Nor does it lie in getting up an encyclopædia-ful of material details. It is not found in learning up other people's business which we may never be called upon to transact. It is not proved by a superficial acquaintance with a number of useful facts. A hunger and thirst for these alone shows a mind practically unpractical, it is a beginning made at the wrong end. Facts are eminently useful, but an accumulation of facts is not practical knowledge, it is *invertebrate*, and practical knowledge requires a backbone. Further, a practical spirit is not a matter-of-fact, unimaginative type of mind, circumscribed by material conditions and delighting in them; far from it; but of this hereafter in examples.

Practical spirit is an attitude of mind, a point of view, a manner of judging and deciding, much more than a department of knowledge.

How, then, does it show itself in life? I suggest these six marks among others for your consideration:

Study the people who carry things through.

Study the people who always fall on their feet.

Study the people who take nothing amiss.

Study the people who make themselves generally useful and hold themselves cheap.

Study the people who take every occurrence as a matter of course.

Study the people who keep to the point.

Partly gift and partly virtue, happy disposition or precious training; sweet reasonableness inborn, or hardly-won unselfishness; sternness of schooling or native adaptability,—industry, training or genius,—these have gone to make it up. If they had not genius they had training, if they had not training they had industry, and this at least is within the reach of all.

Now learn by contraries and consider the contrasting types :

Those who fail you in an emergency or in the long run.

Those who are for ever in catastrophes.

Those to whom the grasshopper is a burden.

Those who are always surprised at the turn of events.

Those who are diverted from the point by details or accidental interests.

In these cases it is sufficient to suggest the points for consideration without further development.

The most interesting part of the question remains,—the means to acquire, as far as it can be acquired, a practical spirit.

No particular prescriptions can be given, it is a case of regimen, rather than of drugs. In general cultivate the open eye, the hearing ear (both much rarer than you would think), an observant habit of mind, a careful memory, an accurate way of speaking. Neglect no opportunity of listening, and classify the knowledge thus acquired. Remember, too, that it is a trust, not a personal possession, so do not be lighthearted about losing it.

Cultivate the wish to learn, rather than the wish to be taught. Be determined to *pick up* and do not wait for the professor and the pedagogical devices of his art. This illustration is recommended to young students of any language. Do not think that lessons will do it; if you wait for lessons you will take a lifetime. Seize a word

here, an idiom there, use the one you learned yesterday, experiment with the one you have just heard, rightly or wrongly ; *use* is what you want, not teaching. The same may be said of other branches of knowledge. If we wait to be taught we shall never learn. If Livingstone and others of his type had waited to be taught to read, they might have died without having learned it.

Try to render all possible service to others, not talking of the thing, but doing it. If you are known to be a person who loves to serve, many opportunities will come in your way, to your great inconvenience perhaps, but to your far greater profit and instruction ; be a cheap person.

Study and imitate good models in common life.

And for your further consideration and admiration let me suggest three high types to show what the practical mind allied to genius or virtue can rise to :

John Sebastian Bach, so radiant in the sincerity of his art, so true, consistent, convinced and convincing,—practical in that he sends you back to your duty without a doubt in your mind, cleared, braced and steadied, stronger and abler to *act*, that is the practical note—that is the practical mind in music.

Shakespeare, the master of the *real*, teaching us that which *is* and leading us to that which ought to be, giving us experience gathered from human life and making for all that is soundest, most whole and honourable in human nature.

Solomon's 'valiant woman' who needs no panegyric beyond the strong, terse sentences in which he drew her portrait : 'She will render him good and not evil all the days of her life. She hath sought wool and flax and wrought by the counsel of her hands. . . . She hath looked well to the paths of her house and hath not eaten her bread idle. . . . Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.'

A SPECIMEN OF THE THOUGHTS OF 1903

AN October corn market in a country town had a stamp of its own before the agricultural depression set in over England. Farmers are now rooted and confirmed in the idea that there is something hopelessly wrong somewhere, occult in its causes and crushing in its results, so that there is little spirit left in them. But in those days there were men of 'light and leading' among the Midland agricultural folk, and there was a pardonable pride in bringing forward two or three of those little bags which contain corn samples, with a knowledge that they would secure the attention of buyers and the favourable comments of other growers. There was a certain elation, too, in driving to market in a dog-cart behind the showy four-year-old that was meant to figure in the meets of the next season, if the wheat sold well.

This is our New-Year's Corn Exchange. We have met with our samples from the harvest of 1903, and there are growers of promise and enlightenment among us, untouched by agricultural depression; let us see what they have brought. 'Bright, heavy, clean,' those are the approving words that go round the agricultural circles as each sample is handled; we shall probably use the same words, or the equivalent, as the samples of the year's thinking are handed round. Some of the farmers bring true wheat, red or white, with high-sounding names that carry us back to the palmy days of wheat growing after the Peninsular War; others 'Chevalier' barley, that brings an echo of 'the '45,' or 'Black Tartarian' oats,

showing that *some one* at least knows what comes from Central Asia.

Now what have you brought, growers of this Thames valley district, agriculturists of the London clay. Don't be offended at being likened to farmers. God Himself has called Himself a husbandman. *Pater meus agricola est.*

Here is mine, and I labelled the sample bag after an old favourite variety—'Talavera wheat, grown in a home county.' It opens with a renunciation of what I have often maintained—*confiteor*, it is good to begin with this. I have often said that your thought *could* be expressed in words if only you were attentive enough, or painstaking and laborious enough, or enlightened and educated enough, or provided with sufficiently good dictionaries to find them. I renounce and abandon this theory. 'Not in dialectics has it pleased the Lord to save His people,' said St. Ambrose centuries ago, and man cannot rescue his thought in words any more than the Lord can save His people in logic. Language carries his thought,—yes, but too often must carry it as a bullock train in South Africa might carry a statesman, Cecil Rhodes, let us say, . . .—an unwieldy carriage sticking fast in the mud, breaking down at the fords, hopelessly stayed by the obstinacy of the team. The statesman is unworthily borne along, slowly and heavily. If he reaches his journey's end safely, it is much, if he is only exhausted and delayed, not shattered, it is all that can be hoped for.

To return to the thought and the word. In community a young member makes a deep remark. It has cost her, we hope, days of thought and perhaps minutes of anguish before she uttered it in the best chosen words she could find. But at last there it is. Then we know what happens. If the Community is in full holiday force, this young and deep remark is playfully caught up by a professed and volleyed across the Community to

some one who is supposed to be like-minded. This one responds to the challenge and proceeds to explain the remark. Before the original speaker is able to make herself heard, to protest that she never meant anything so wise, the original remark has been labelled, catalogued, and indexed, and reported, and reviewed, and annotated, and prefaced, and dedicated and edited in two or three editions; then translated into two or three languages, and summarised or perhaps published in an abridged and expurgated edition for the special use of the young by X. Then it has been scratched with a *nihil obstat* by the young professed and received the *imprimatur* of the old professed and gone out into the world bearing at least ten more meanings than the one it originally bore, and the bewildered author recognises 'that every one of them is right.' For all the time the meaning has been coming out all round, if the thought has any real value, 'a future in it,' as we say, spreading out beyond the phrases and the words,—and we are awed at moments by seeing that we have said more than we knew; and we can understand about the

' Words made musical by poets dead,
In which the fulness of all meaning lies.
Sweetening and gathering sweetness evermore,'

—and how a poet may grow up to understand his own best lines with wonder how he wrote them—half comprehending.

And then we understand Cardinal Newman's 'illative sense,'¹ and wonder why some Thomists should denounce and scout the idea of its existence. Do these not own it themselves under another name? Call it what you will, there it is, the faculty of insight; in spiritual things, the virgin sight, the virgin step of John the 'Divine,' not to be outrun by the heaviness of reason and sense-experi-

¹ See *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, by J. H. Cardinal Newman, chap. ix.

ment, not to be hoodwinked, trammelled or deceived ; in the high principles of human things an almost prophetic intuition. ' So it is, or so it is not, I know not why, but so it is or so it is not.' Truly an *illative* sense bearing swiftly and safely over the thin ice, too swiftly to be engulfed ; the ice-way would not bear if the mind rested for a moment, but the end is reached in safety. A ' woman's faculty,' they say, and why not ? Woman was the last step in creation, not man. If he has it he inherits it from his mother, and many a gracious gift is thus inherited. But this field is getting too wide for an essay ; at any rate, it will not come out of the same sample bag. Let us come to practical suggestions.

1. Trust the illative sense and take for granted much that it shows. (*How much* depends on you.) Don't pickaxe thin ice in front of you, but keep moving ; if you want to use a pickaxe go to the quarries, revel in mathematics, glory in logic, but do not come near with that profane tool to the sanctuaries of love and belief. Trust the sense and skim lightly ; beyond, you will reach the strong ice again.

2. Take for granted much in other people that will not bear close examination. Take for granted people's obvious meaning, obvious to your illative sense, obscure perhaps to your reason. This is an exercise of intellectual charity and good manners. It means, look more to the spirit than to the flesh, and even more it means, judge of things in their *wholeness*, not in their parts ; but this is a canon that has such wide application that again it would go beyond the limits of one sample bag.

(Pedagogical note : This does not apply to the tuition of children, from whom we are bound to exact serious efforts to be lucid and accurate).

3. Don't look your fundamental notions too hard in the eyes ; there too *take them for granted*, and own their prescriptive right of possession unless some voice as authoritative as the Archbishop's in a Pastoral, or as

normal as the collective vote of the community or your religious Superiors in direction, tell you that they are all wrong and need reconstruction from their very foundations ; otherwise do not pull down the house about your ears. Up to a certain distance an object grows clearer if brought nearer to the eye, after that it is blurred ; so for fundamental notions, don't go too near, it spoils the focus, keep them at the right distance, that is *the normal*.

4. Last and most serious advice. Never give up trying to express your meaning although you know that you never can. It is one of those efforts doomed to failure that are nevertheless some of the best things in life ; always nearer to your meaning, always better, but never *there*, never complete. It is of these impossibilities that our best achievements are born. Self-satisfaction dwarfs our growth. It is the great, striving, idealising discontent that feeds the flame of thought and aspiration, and for us, the sacred fire of advancement in religious perfection.

So to tie up my sample as the farmer does before his friends the growers, and the corn-merchants and the dear dusty millers,—my sample of the year's thought is, the reality and value of the illative sense.

A PARABLE FROM NATURE

A DISCONTENTED child stood gazing blankly into a garden. It was the old story : ‘ *You must,* ’ ‘ *I won’t* ’—‘ *you ought,* ’ ‘ *I shan’t* ’—‘ *you shall,* ’ ‘ *I will not !* ’ But a more acute phase than usual had been reached, for instead of one of the interlocutors being without and the other within, both were now within. It was I who said ‘ *you must,* ’ and it was I also who replied ‘ *I will not.* ’ When matters are at such a complete deadlock—when one is twelve years old, and finds oneself ‘ a failure,’ where can help come from ? This time it came from the garden itself.

A long musical sigh arose from the garden. You might have thought it was a breeze from the south, or it might have been the concerted hum of two or three thousand bees,—but the child understood it, and it was *words*. ‘ I was common clay,’ said the garden, ‘ until the roses were planted in me.’ This was a fact obviously true. The two champions inside stopped fighting. The fact went in and took possession.

Common clay,—heavy, lumpy, uniform, lifeless, dull and uninteresting ; rugged in the dry season, slippery in the wet ; turning both sun and rain to bad account,—vexatious to the owner, wholly undesirable.

Yet the clay had possibilities. The owner was a lover of roses, the gardener was an enthusiast, and between them the roses must grow. But who shall describe the preparatory troubles ? The ground had not even the honour of being ploughed, it was *dug*, and dug again,—turned over, down to the subsoil,—and they shook their heads over that. It was picked for stones, forked to

eradicate colts-foot, raked to clear it of weeds. Its natural products were condemned,—its docks and dandelions pointed to neglect,—couch and carnation grass suggested want of training,—somebody thought they saw rushes in one corner of it, and many held up their hands in hopeless disapproval. The common clay suffered much, and thought that all was over. It had not even the heart to show chickweed on its surface, *Das Lied ist aus!* The rose-grower and the gardener held on and dug it all over again, with heavy top-dressing, . . . it was worse than ever.

But out of that came roses—‘so, and no otherwise.’

There, then, was an explanation of the inner conflict. All detestable and incomprehensible things began to wear another aspect; they were means by which the common clay was to become roses,—white roses of sincerity, damask roses of self-sacrifice, precious cloth-of-gold roses of wealth and sweetness of heart, too rich to know suspicion, and too sweet to hold resentment, a rose so hard to grow but so perfectly satisfying when it really flowers; and ‘*Céleste*,’ the bud of ideals,—and the noble old ‘*Géant des batailles*,’ and stout ‘*Magna Charta*,’ whom we moderns are beginning to forget, and many others. Perhaps there is a ‘modern side’ in virtues as well as in public schools, with its own advantages and its own drawbacks, and here, too, perhaps some of us are entered for the ‘modern’ and some for the ‘classical’ side; but it does not much matter, provided we grow roses in our souls.

Time went on, and on our top terrace of the Janiculum stood a Novice with the same eyes and the same brow as those of the child. The discontent had vanished, the face had set into earnest purpose, but many unsolved problems still pressed their claims to be dealt with, and unspoken questions uttered themselves out of the eyes. There are young, thoughtful faces that appeal unconsciously for answers. They look into older faces and

say without uttering a word : ‘ Do *you* know ? ’ ‘ Do you understand ? ’ ‘ Can you explain ? ’ This may well be at twenty-five. They are not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, but also they are not far from the black chasm of discouragement. Other faces at that age are full of assertion and affirmation ; it may be well with them,—they will never hang over a chasm, but probably they will never reach a height.

Again help came from the garden. Rooted in the loose limestone the freshly pruned vines stood hideous, twisted, hacked, almost done to death, without a vestige of beauty or, apparently—a stir of life, stripped of all former growth, with nothing to live upon, and the bare rock to hold to. Yet in those hacked stumps slept the soul of the vine, and a few days hence, after rain, it would bound into life.

And out of that came grapes—‘ so, and no otherwise.’

The vine said, ‘ surrender yourself to the life, and *trust*,’ and after that the Novice saw that the very hacking and hewing contained answers to the problem of life.

After years, in Lebanon, under the cedars, the face had changed again, though it was still the same. At fifty (this you will recognise as my favourite thesis to an unbelieving world !) the face *ought* to make quiet affirmations. Either the questions are answered or it does not matter that they cannot be. The answer to so many questions is only, ‘ wait ’ ; and their victorious solution is ‘ trust.’ And there is nothing so restful as the faces of ‘ fifty and over ’ which tell of

‘ Imaginations calm and fair,
The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience like a sea at rest.’

But this cannot be had for the asking, nor is it ready-made. And it is of no use to ask : ‘ How long will it take ? ’ It must have time to grow. No one can tell how

it is done, but it *is* done. The cedar must be long years rooted in the ground, living at a high altitude, weighted by the snows, strained by the winds, dried at the roots at some seasons, and in others half washed down by the floods.

So grows the incorruptible cedar of Lebanon—‘so, and no otherwise.’

‘So, and no otherwise,’ is the record of our various growths; formative influences from without, meeting responsive possibilities from within, and the word of growing life is: ‘Surrender—co-operate—wait—trust.’

‘His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.’

WORDSWORTH.

AFTER two stormy sessions and the death of the ill-starred Education Bill, it is only those who are most ardent in the cause who can even bear to hear the subject mentioned ; most people are in a state of educational collapse, except a few Nonconformist leaders on the one hand, who are still ‘breathing forth threatening and slaughter,’ and on the other those for whom the word has too wide a meaning and too long a life to be expressed in terms of a Bill, or measured by sessions of Parliament. For the Church in her eternal youth is ever beginning again, with unwearying interest, while her experience of centuries saves her from perturbation in a crisis, as much as from depression when the critical moment has passed.

What the Church knows we believe ; the fruit of her experience is our transmitted inheritance, and therefore, in face of the unknown future, big with peril, we are not afraid, for God is with us.

Therefore we can afford to take undiminished interest in the subject that many cannot bear to mention, but at this time of Christmas, when for a moment hostilities are suspended, *toto orbe in pace composito*, our concern passes beyond the schoolroom and the class, to a wider region, where the interest ceases to be professional and becomes human, ranging beyond the means to reach the desired end.

Human education, in its widest sense, refuses to be

guaranteed by competent, qualified teachers, or regulated by Boards, or tested by examinations or recorded in percentages. It is a *bringing to be* of something whole and living, out of passive elements and latent forces, and it needs as many conditions to bring it to perfection as the natural process of growth in the plant world. God has set over man many tutors and governors, uncertificated indeed, but supremely efficient, and if man does not lend a willing ear to them, and a heart to their discipline, he may reach distinction as a marvel of academical success, but he is not educated. Wordsworth gives us the clue to this larger education in the lines from *Brougham Castle* :

‘ His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.’

These in their songs and in their silences first took in hand the child who afterwards

‘ . . . kept in lofty place
The wisdom which adversity had bred.’

These gave him the hearing ear, the seeing eye, the large horizon of solitude and the quiet of mind which must underlie all true greatness of thought and action. There is something wanting to perfect education when childhood has not had its share of this teaching, and the beat and stress of human life has been around it from the beginning, never leaving it the leisure to be rapt in silence and alone.

These are not *all* the teachers who have their share in fashioning the perfect mind and will, but they are the first and perhaps the last.

It may be that after learning from them in childhood, and going out from them to the university world of larger life and thought in youth, and afterwards trying theories, principles and aspirations in the furnace of action during

the years of middle life,—it may be that we return in old age to those early teachers, who themselves never grow old, and then with quiet mind review the years of varied training, link up and gather together in one the first and last precious thoughts which are the harvest of a lifetime.

Young, vigorous, full-grown life needs room to expand in action, it needs the clash of thought with other minds, it needs conflict and adversity, experience, humiliation and stripes, efforts intense and long sustained even unto weariness—to bring its powers to maturity. These, too, are lessons for life and they are beyond the language of ‘woods and rills.’ When the powers are thus brought to maturity, in the fulness of their strength, they need scope that the talents entrusted to each may bring their due return. This is the gift of cities and their burden, but if in other years we have not heard other voices, then, when activity fails, thought has not the quiet provinces of its fatherland to which it can withdraw, and the last years instead of fruition bring a sense of failure and regret.

Not only in the length, but in the breadth of life also a want will be felt. However full of activity when pressing duties crowd in upon us, something beyond this is needed to make it perfect, some halls of space and avenues of leisure in the soul, some stately distances of manners and high porticoes of silence, some long reverent approaches to the interior mansion, where God and His Angels condescend to walk; these are inherited from the early, silent and leisurely years—the woods and rills and starry sky and lonely hills of the poem.

Could we disentangle the holy and lovely influences that have shaped our deepest thoughts and given us our most beautiful outlooks upon life? A poet of Wordsworth’s calm, reflective mind can do so, and it may be, that in the measure that we can understand and utter them, we too are humble poets of the inner life. But in

that measure we shall be listeners still, waiting upon voices from afar, that all are not capable of hearing, receiving influences from common things, which transcend their accepted values and significance. In our poet's own words :

‘ Listen, ponder, hold them dear,
For of God, of God they are.’

Let their influence, then, steal over each power of our soul and every mood of our mind, that they, teachers sent from God, may make a sanctuary silence within us, not voiceless, not without music or meaning, but vibrating to every touch of their Creator and the works of His hands.

O All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord, praise and exalt Him above all for ever ! ye heavens, bless the Lord, praise and exalt Him above all for ever.

HIGHWAYS AND BY-WAYS IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

By the highway—we go for the sake of arriving ; in the by-way we go for the sake of going. This is a general law, though, as in most human things there are exceptions. It is, however, sufficiently constant as a working rule to enable us to say what kind of travellers we shall meet respectively on highways and in by-ways, and beyond that to gain some ideas of these two roads in the spiritual life.

Highways and by-ways differ, not accidentally, but in essentials, they are not parallel ways, but they cross at right angles to each other. Highways are made, by-ways make themselves. Highways have a history, by-ways have only memories. Highways reach their terminus in a great town, the terminus of a by-way is often nothing at all, the track grows fainter and mysteriously vanishes, like an unanswered question. Highways require attention and keep accounts, by-ways evade attention and having nothing to spend, there *are* no accounts to keep. Highways attain, by-ways attract. Highways suffer blame, by-ways are ignored. Highways dictate, by-ways influence. Highways are open, by-ways are subtle. Highways themselves unaltering, leave the traveller unaltered, they merely convey him to his destination. By-ways themselves unassuming, yet have a power of assumption, the stronger for its self-effacement. And in the end, by one of those contradictory effects which seem to be native products of the earth, the highway—the imperious,

masterful, commanding, positive highway—is a servant ; and the elusive, undetermined, silent, solitary by-way is a master ; and by it we go, not because we want to go to some foreseen end, but because we *must* go.

The passengers on highways and by-ways are as diverse as the ways by which they travel. The men of system seek the highway ; they want to get *there*, wherever *there* may be. They seek efficient means of transport, rapid, certain, and direct, undistracting, unhesitating. They like the road to be well ‘graded’—perfectly macadamised. They wish to see where they are going—the guide-post at the cross-roads says much to them—every one should be properly informed, properly fitted out, exact to time, but it is above all essential that every one should *get there*.

The most efficient of God’s creatures pour along that way, ‘not many mighty, not many noble are called,’ but these few elect usually go by the highway, and usually arrive. The great statesmen, the great generals, the founders, the up-builders, the judges, and governors, either of Church or State, the great professionals go this way, the great orators, the men of fact, the men of work, the men of action, the prompt, the decided, the practical, the awake, the foresightful, the consistent, and in the humble walks, the reliable, the honest, those who know and do. The huntsman by preference brings his hounds round by the highroad, and the farmer in his gig returns that way from market, strange, silent, observant, reliable people who know their own business to perfection, theirs are the rights and methods of the highway. But straight across this track comes another current of travellers, that of the by-ways, who go . . . because go they must, and it is not evident where they are going.

There pass the inspired people, the seers, poets in contemplation, shepherds and sons of the soil who hide behind irresponsible faces strange gleams of the unseen world, shadows of inarticulate fears, and hopes still

more unutterable. There pass village children gathering flowers, and gypsies in quest of forbidden things, and crazy, harmless wanderers perhaps wiser than the sane, and all the uncounted seekers after that which can never be known, and lovers of that which always lies beyond. The people of the other world are attracted to the by-ways, where the mysteries call them onward, and the shy nightingales sing, and the stress of life is lifted off, and the ticking of time is still, where it is no longer the chronometer that divides the seconds, but the sun that rules the day, and the moon and stars that govern the night ; where life seems larger because of silence and calm, where the soul may be invaded and taken captive unresisting by the power of the world to come, where the mind learns to rest in the Lord and wait patiently for the heart's desire, where the conviction grows that at long last all things come home to their God, *Ad Te omnis caro veniet !*

The saints are there, yes, but the saints, thank God ! are everywhere, for every frame of the human mind has been anointed and crowned in the order of Saints. ' Thou hast made us to our God a Kingdom and Priests and we shall reign.' Kings for the highway, priests and people for the by-way, all true to themselves and true to God, made to be themselves, and anointed for their heavenly calling.

Made for labour and anointed for rest.

Made for faith and anointed for sight.

Made for battle and anointed for love.

We watched one moment more, and they passed by, a saint of the highway and one of the by-way, and left us wondering. A heavy motor-car went by—50 horsepower—carrying a Prince of the Church. He looked up at the guide-post at the cross-roads, glanced at his watch, glanced at the speedometer, turned a moment westward to the sunset, and set his lips ; *Le repos ailleurs*, he said under his breath, to himself.

The dust of his motor had scarcely settled, when another Prince of the Church crossed the highway on foot, and followed the by-way at right angles. A rabbit sat up in his path and was not afraid, a little flight of chaffinches followed the beauty of holiness: 'Och! och!' said the saint, 'take it quietly,' and he laughed gently to himself. But out of the west, from the glory of the sunset, the Angels of God looked after him—rapt.

MAXIMS FOR THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

COMPARE, contrast, discuss or develop all or any of the following as maxims for the spiritual life :

1. *Allons au plus pressé.*
2. *Solvitur ambulando.*
3. 'The manna gathered yesterday
Already savours of decay.'

I propose to treat them by comparison and contrast. Do they meet closely enough to be compared ? Do they part markedly enough to be contrasted ? At first sight, no, they seem to be, as they were, thrown together by chance ; on second reading the features of each come out. Past, present and future ; present, future and past. Contemplative, active and mixed ; active, mixed, contemplative, therefore :

Present,—active,—*allons au plus pressé* ;
Future,—mixed,—*solvitur ambulando* ;
Past,—contemplative,—

'The manna gathered yesterday
Already savours of decay.'

It is a mistake to insist upon making things fit into numbers or shapes, yet these maxims seem to be not unwilling to chime in tune one with the other according to this theme.

I. '*Allons au plus pressé !*' *Allons !* to-day, this minute —*Allons !* that is a rod and a staff, rod to the dreamer, staff to the undecided, guide to the enterprising, rule to the devout, curb to the theorist, moderator to the enthusiast, expression of the instant need of things, formula for the

school of the 'present moment,' epitaph over the tomb of the good and faithful servants who have lived at high pressure and died under it. The maxim results in the elimination of all but the pressing and the urgent and most necessary ; its fault is that it eliminates too much, and tends to produce the mere worker ; exact, efficient, peremptory, a little contemptuous of all that is not an instant need. Leisure, contemplation, high thoughts which colour life but do not result in immediate action, such things are left out of its busy programme ; it saves a situation and reaches a result, but it does not illuminate or glorify, so never a saint, and never a poet, nor a 'wizard that charmeth wisely' are found among its followers.

2. In sharp contrast with this, place next, the contemplative maxim that speaks of yesterday. This too has a look of haste, but how far removed from the preoccupied, business-like haste of the good soul of the urgent, instant moment. This is the word of the contemplative ; remote, aloof, dropping even the handful of manna gathered yesterday ; eager, how eager, but for what ? For fresh manna, to-day's portion, but only because it sustains the heavenward march, forgetting the things that are behind. Yesterday has gone, let it go utterly ; even the manna, even the sweetness, even the light of yesterday. It did its work, now its work is done. Faith is so strong, and the hills of eternity so near that all else must drop off, and detachment is the law of life : 'Touch me not, hold me not, let me be free.' The flowers of yesterday are withered, the echoes of yesterday have died, the warfare of yesterday is over, the manna if it is not spent is decaying. Yesterday *is not*, it was a stepping stone, safe for one moment, then engulfed and the floods rolled over it ; to-day will follow, it is only the foothold of a moment, God's most excellent '*now*.' '*Now*,' says the Spirit, 'tread firmly a moment, snatch the manna as it falls, taste it, then let go, let all go, God remains.'

3. Between these two goes the sober, hopeful, truthful promise '*solvitur ambulando*'—the maxim of the mixed life, and the verified utterance of all Christian experience. When we had been caught between Pharaoh and his host behind, and the Red Sea before us, what was the answer that came clanging from Heaven to our wail of distress? 'Why criest thou to Me? Speak to the children of Israel to *go forward*.' Yes, into the impossible, into the Red Sea, to be drowned, against all hope and reason. Yes, into the impossible, *solvitur ambulando*, and in the end the sea *did* open up and everything went through.

Bear with me, patient community, if I say once more that it is beautiful to grow old,—*solvitur ambulando*. We know now that it comes true. In the morning of our religious life we thought that winged steeds would carry us flying to the heights of sanctity. But it was not so. Pegasus put us down very soon, and we thought that all was over. We hid our burning faces in the sand and felt that 'we could no more.' In that school of experience lessons are often learned with face buried in the sand. Perhaps we looked about for a juniper tree, like the prophet, and requested for our soul that we might die, observing that we were no better than our fathers (which was so obvious as scarcely to be worth mentioning!). But some angel of God came by, and roused us, and set us on our feet, and bade us eat the bread of the strong, and we walked in the strength of that food again in the journey of forty days and forty nights. And now at least we know where we are going. We lift up our eyes to the hills and see the opal lights of morning. And across them day by day comes the white flash of the Host, telling us that all is true and all is well.

And then we move on for the day's march, in the file of the climbing mules.

Is that what it has come to? Mules with broken harness, no trappings, no bells, no wings, with nothing

but the heroic obstinacy of a mule determined to arrive in the end. And we shall arrive.

As it has been truly said, ' Truth, no matter how beclouded by doubt, becomes, at the touch of the loyal and assenting will, translucent. The effort to obey scatters the shadows. It brings an instant verification. Obedience is the true and final solvent of doubt.' It is done in the doing. *Solvitur ambulando.*

I heard an expressive comment from afar on all these matters,—the voice of a holy man who speaks broken English,—' de doing of it. . . . A-A-A-H ! . . . *de doing of it !* '

FOUR CLASSES OF SOULS

‘SHOULD you prefer that it might be truly said of you, that you had a soul of iron, of ivory, of crystal, or of fire?’ What qualities does it seem to you that each would stand for, and what saint would you take to have such a soul?

A soul of iron suggests to me the loud, melodious clang of a spirit crying out to God, now ‘*de profundis*,’ now ‘*in excelsis*,’ a strong soul, made for suffering and spiritual greatness, destined to pass through tribulation, necessities, distresses, stripes, prisons and labours, in the spirit, if not in the flesh, but probably both the spirit and the flesh will be tried with the great company of acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation, as iron is fashioned in the fire and on the anvil. I should take St. John of the Cross to be a soul of iron.

A soul of ivory. One which has great resources of mind and heart. One of the things which appeals to me particularly in ivory is the life-history which has gone before, when the great tusk was carried through the free range of forest and jungle in the joy of life, and exuberance of strength. After which came death, a great renunciation, a great surrender of the soul, and then a new existence ‘in chastity, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in sweetness.’ Ivory lends itself with indifference to many services. Even an ivory ball is full of meaning, it shows its own individual grain, it has kept such elasticity and rebounds with such a ringing note, it cannot forget that it was once a living thing. But an ivory statue of Our Lady, ‘*Turris eburnea*,’ expresses best what I think

of ivory, and most of all if it be one of those works of art, no longer made, called *chryselephantine*, or ivory inlaid with gold.

I take St. Gertrude to be a soul of ivory, inlaid by God with gold ; a *chryselephantine* saint.

A soul of crystal. One that is true to itself throughout, transparently true, very definite in its form, and unclouded by human respect ; admitting great varieties in colour ; its characteristics are truth, joy, light, and clearness of vision.

I take St. Augustine as typical of a crystal soul, the light of God goes right through him, and in his transparency of soul he hides nothing, but passes it on to us, not even refracted, in his revelation of himself.

A soul of fire. Father Faber writes that

‘ . . . the old Hebrew times, they were ages of fire,
When fainting souls fed on each dim, figured word,
And God called men He loved most, the men of desire.’

This harmonises with the conclusion to which I have come after examining several souls of fire. If one dares to mention an Apostle (but let us not discuss them), St. Paul and St. John were souls of fire, likewise St. Jerome, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Ignatius. The characteristic quality in all seems to be that they were insatiable, like ‘*consuming fire*.’ Their desires of the glory of God, the salvation of souls, the perfection of the elect, of labours, of vigils, of fastings, and especially of the love of God, were never satisfied.

After much deliberation, I would choose to be a soul of ivory.

THE DIALOGUE OF THE THREE CHILDREN IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

PART I. THE THOUGHTS OF ANANIAS

PART II. THE THOUGHTS OF AZARIAS

PART III. THE THOUGHTS OF MISAEL

PART IV. THE INTERPRETATIONS OF DANIEL

PART I

THE THOUGHTS OF ANANIAS

(Enter ANANIAS, AZARIAS, and MISAEL, like the figures on Assyrian sculptures.)

MISAEL. By a mysterious and inscrutable decree of Providence, when the gates of Limbo flew back and the released spirits of the Patriarchs passed with the swiftness of light, from hope to fulfilment, from patience to action, from expectancy to realisation, we were left behind, and have been detained in Limbo for more than two thousand years.

AZARIAS. When the sheets of flame closed over us in Nabuchodonosor's furnace, Misael, it seemed to me that patience was the sweetest of virtues, only a little silencing of desire, a little tacitness of soul, a little self-possession till we should see how the Lord's deliverance of His servants should be accomplished. And there came the cool, moist breeze in the furnace. But in two thousand years I have learned that patience is something more than that.

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ANANIAS. What is patience, Azarias ?

AZARIAS. Patience is the virtue of tried souls, of souls tried in the furnace, not for an hour but for centuries. It is the virtue of incorruptible silence, the adamant that has no colour of its own, but gives back the light of all other virtues. Patience makes men all-passive that God may be all-active in them. It imprisons the flame of the most holy desires in bonds of unconquerable endurance more holy still, thus giving them purer life. This I have learned concerning patience in these two thousand years in Limbo. But now where are we ? for I see we are not yet released, and yet we have taken back our bodies as though to travel again in the long pilgrimage of earth.

ANANIAS. If we have been two thousand years in Limbo, seventy or eighty years of wandering again in the desert should not seem much to us, before we reach the land of vision. Yet such is the rebellion of the soul, and such the difficulty of acquiring that same diamond virtue of patience, that I should be ready to say : ' Give me two thousand years again to wait, with the repose of certainty, rather than seventy or eighty years of action with the issue of the battle still in doubt.

MISAEEL. Yet, Ananias, we who have passed through the furnace of fire know that the arm of God is not shortened. His ear has not grown deaf nor His eye blind, His strength has not failed, the keeper of Israel slumbers not nor sleeps. Come, therefore, and like Jacob let us serve another seven years, or seventy times seven if need be, to win our Rachael, the ever-blessed beauty of vision.

AZARIAS. I have within my soul a security that this second life is not for ourselves but for others, and it is to be for their fruit and good. Come ! Ananias, courage. We live as Christians now, no longer as Patriarchs, we shall walk in light ; though it may be from old habit we shall grope a little in the light, as those who suddenly receive their sight and cannot yet trust it. But if it be

true, as it seems to me, that this new life is for others, how shall we live it? With what aim, with what action, with what end? Let us each in turn speak our thoughts in conference, and, Ananias, do thou begin, and we shall listen.

ANANIAS. Not only listen but chide me if needful, or enlighten me; we cannot spend two thousand years in Limbo without learning the treasure hidden in correction. For my part I take it that to be corrected and to correct oneself are the very warp and woof of life; to be salted and to be salt. Forgive me if I change my figure to make my meaning clear by touching it on all sides. As an axiom, then, I would lay down that he that would live for others must be salt.

MISAEI. Yet salt is not life,—and he who gives but salt cannot be life-giving.

ANANIAS. Salt presupposes life or death, Misael. If death, then, it is hopeless death like our asphalt lake, the salt Dead Sea. I am presupposing life, for our conversation is to be of living for others and of what the new order calls 'Apostolic men' as the Master Himself called them, for I have heard it said that 'He called to Himself twelve Disciples whom He named Apostles.' Now, an Apostle is one that is sent on an embassy, and an embassy is not to the dead but to the living. Therefore, et cetera.

AZARIAS. But whence the necessity of salt?

ANANIAS. From the Master's own words: 'You are the salt of the earth.'

MISAEI. 'Therefore, et cetera,' Ananias! you are already of the twentieth century, I see, and therefore pressed for time—*suppress, condense, abbreviate—hasten the conclusion*. No, no, we must keep yet a little leisure and of the mental courtesy of leisure, a little of the ceremonial of Limbo, pray, for my mind cannot yet move quite so fast, and I love the stately steps of thought that go with measure to the conclusion. Therefore, again pray, Ananias, lead us fairly through the domain of your

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thought, hurry us not, drive us not under the pressure of 'therefore' and 'et cetera.'

ANANIAS. The fear of wearying and not the haste of time, is that which makes me feel pressure and impart it, for I know my mind *now* after two thousand years of reflection, but what I know *now* I think that all others have seen long ago, many centuries before me.

AZARIAS. That is part of the timidity of your nature, Ananias ; for Ananias is timid and fearful though he stepped into the fiery furnace as the bravest of the three.

MISAEEL. And thus he gave us much to think of, and changed *my* thoughts, at least on one point ; for I understood, thereby, how it is not fearlessness, but fearfulness that is the basis of true courage. For fearlessness has a victory without a struggle, a cheaper laurel wreath, but in fearfulness, if a man go forward, his spirit triumphs over his fear, and dares what his nature shrinks from. Therefore, Ananias, let us go back to your *et cetera*, and be persuaded that our minds are as slow as your own !

ANANIAS. Thanks, Misael, for this cheering word, I will proceed. During two thousand years I have watched the human race streaming into the temples of patience and purification, the abodes of suffering and humiliation, and it has come back to me that the human race is a great failure ; failure in the individual, failure in the type, failure in the whole order ; that the majority reach the end of their battle sodden, broken, incoherent, meaningless, having lived without an aim, and died without accomplishing anything ; useless lives, wasted powers, colourless souls ! How many have I seen in these two thousand years that seem to have lived with a purpose ? that have moved in order like the star answering to the call of their Creator ; that have looked clear-eyed and intuitive to the end, as Angels ; that have loved and suffered, true and singlehearted as men ?

AZARIAS. Many ! many ! Ananias—many not known of men, but counted by God. I have seen the mark in their foreheads, the signet set in their countenance, God's own. Perhaps they wavered, yes. Perhaps at times the shock of battle bore the legions back. They have seemed to die defeated, but God has lifted the broken life from the battlefield, and crowned them victors nevertheless. You have seen the dented armour, the broken limbs, the spattered standards, the dust and blood, but the unconquered heart, that perhaps did not even know of its own victory, that has escaped you. God has not let His work be shipwrecked. *Therefore*, Ananias, forgive me that I broke in upon the measure of your thoughts, and let us hear them further.

ANANIAS. Yes, hear me out, but then again I pray you—*salt* me, *correct* me. Yet at first you must follow my thoughts from my own premises, and, therefore, I repeat it, I feel the human race a great failure in the type and in the individual, and I watched the tendencies that made it so. The tendency to *relax*, to let go, to drift, to become many isolated units, to lose *oneness* of aim, to care for none but self, and dwindle into littleness. What might be so great as *one*, becomes so small as *many*. Now all this is—pardon the word, a process of *decomposition*, a life in decay, a million poor little parasitical lives, for one great life. And *therefore* and *thence* the necessity for salt—‘You are the salt of the earth.’

MISAEI. And therefore, *therefore* ? Step by step, Ananias.

ANANIAS. My ‘therefore’ springs out of the needs of men, and the qualities of salt, and the Master's teaching concerning it. So much for the need of man,—let us pass to the qualities of salt. Salt is pungent, biting, purifying, preserving, astringent and drying in its effects. Salt is the great antiseptic in the great hospital of the world's decay. Now consider, whence the salt ? Of old, that is in the beginning of the new order, and according

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to the mind of the Master, it was the Disciples, His Disciples, who were the salt of the earth, pungent, burning, astringent, preserving from decay around them . . . but as the salt lost its savour. . . . I fear the salt *has* lost its savour, Azarias. . . .

AZARIAS. Let it pass, Ananias, let it pass. Yet I overheard once, a very common person, yet shrewd, who fell in Purgatory by the side of a great ascetic; and the ascetic asked him whether it were true that there was on earth a great falling away, that the salt had lost its savour, and was neither good for the land nor for the dunghill, and that Christians had entirely fallen away from their first estate. And the common yet shrewd person made answer, saying: 'There are as good fish in the sea, sir, as ever came out of it,' and with submission he resigned himself to the purifying flames of Purgatory. But I pondered his words.

ANANIAS. I trust it is so indeed. For this would give me hope that the world might not be so great a failure. For years, Azarias, I own it to my shame; for hundreds of years, Misael, I say it to my own confusion, this has been an unanswered question, agonising in my mind—whether the Master's work had been a failure or not. On earth it would have been a most grievous temptation—I have heard them call it the missionary's temptation—but there cannot be temptation in Limbo, only questions waiting for answer. The Master taught, and worked and suffered, and died and rose again. The Apostles went out and suffered martyrdom—the Pontiffs have taught and the missionaries have preached, and their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words into the ends of the earth. And now look at the world, and how many profess Christianity? Of those who profess it, how many practise it? Of those who practise it, how many understand it? Of those who understand it, how many are as an odour of sweetness to the world and draw others to it, and thus go beyond the saving of their own souls?

MISAEI. Yet if we understand the Master's mind and heart aright, He would not call His work a failure if but *one* soul drank deeply of the fruit of the vine He planted in His passion. He has said as much Himself to those who could understand Him, 'For thee alone I would have done and suffered all, nor counted the cost as vain.' Ananias, the gates of Hell have not prevailed against His Church, but Limbo has at least taught us the lesson 'wait and see'—but we have again interrupted our Ananias. Let us hear him out.

ANANIAS. 'In my meditation the fire was enkindled,' so many years have I mused and kept silence that my heart is now very full, and at last I am speaking too much.

MISAEI. Not too much, Ananias, let us follow your thought to its conclusion.

ANANIAS. I hasten to a conclusion. What the Disciples *should* be, and are not, *that* the Apostles must be, and tenfold; pungent, purifying, astringent, burning, cauterising the corruption of the world, truly the *salt of the earth*. It is by what the Apostles are themselves, by *individual worth*, that they become the preservation of the earth, each Apostle a centre of health and soundness to those around him, a grain of preserving salt, and thus I should think it worth while to live again, and thus the world might be preserved. Have I spoken truly? If not, correct me; again I pray you salt me, that I may be preserved from the corruption of my own tendency to error.

AZARIAS. Let us postpone it to another conference, the thoughts of Limbo are long for those on earth.

PART II

THE THOUGHTS OF AZARIAS

MISAEI. This day let the thoughts of Azarias be put forth, but first let him tell us wherein he discountenances the thoughts of Ananias.

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AZARIAS. In this only that they fall short, they are negative. To preserve the world is only to arrest decay, to keep matters from growing worse, but to preserve is not to convert the world. Salt is good, but none was ever *drawn* by salt. Salt is not life, though needful indeed for life, and needful especially for decaying life. But what shall I say? It seems to me, gazing from the windows of Limbo upon the human race, that they are still in darkness, if not in the shadow of death, and that it is the charge of the Apostolic man to be the light of the world.

ANANIAS. Yet it is the Master who is the light of the world, for He has said, 'I am the light of the world.'

AZARIAS. And with the same mouth He added, 'You are the light of the world.' And this is how the twofold truth shows itself to me. He, the Master, is the sun in the firmament, but the light of the world, though not all sunlight, yet is *from* sunlight, stored in the ages, in coal and oil and wax, stored for the use of the world. Thus have I seen. And apostolic men are coal and oil and wax with their own qualities, aye, and their own weaknesses and defects, dark, lifeless, brittle as coal, or unstable as oil, or impressionable as wax. Yet the Light of the world has stored in them His light for the lighting of their fellow men. Once in the evening of an earthly day it was given to me to see a lonely rocky island, not far from a lonely coast, and towards it sailed a ship or rather *moved* a ship by those hidden forces that seem to come from Nabuchodonosor's furnace. 'Alas!' said I, 'alas! for the ship.' The sun had sunk, the light was opal in the heavens, but failing fast, and darkness was coming quickly, 'Alas! for the ship,' I said.

MISAEEL. Where, O faint-hearted Azarias, was thy trust in the God that walked with us in the furnace of fire? 'Thy Providence, O Father, governeth all—yea, though a man went to sea without art.'

AZARIAS. True, Misael, there is salt in that rebuke

that might be pungent enough for the taste of Ananias ! for who was I, that I should think myself more careful than the Lord of all. I should have said to myself, ' It is good to wait in silence for the salvation of God.' And thus came salvation. I saw on the side of the dread rocks a grey and lofty tower, and behold at a given moment, there broke from it a light so brilliant that the evening star grew pale, and it flashed full and broad and steady across the ocean to the ship and said, ' Beware ! '—and as it turned and swept the sea to right and left, and all around, I saw that it was through rents in the dark tower that the light was flashed upon the sea, and I said : ' Thus was the light of the sun stored up for the use of the world in the night, and thus is the apostolic man in whom is stored the light of the Light of the world, and through the rents of his dark humanity streams the divine light across the world.'

ANANIAS. Only as a warning, Azarias, and, therefore, not so much more precious than my grain of salt !

AZARIAS. True, if this were all, but the lighthouse said not always ' beware.' I saw two others to right and to left of a perilous strait, and they cried to the seamen ' here ! here ! ' the safe way lies between our friendly lights.' That was as when the Master had sent them two and two before His face. And yet again—at the end of the journey the great lighthouse stood out in the night and flashed to the mariner ' Home ! '

MISAEEL. Yea, the light of truth in the hearts of His apostles draws and leads men to the Light of the world itself. But if one that would be an apostle should ask of our Azarias in what manner this light should shine before men, what would he answer ?

AZARIAS. I should answer him thus, Misael, as the Master Himself said—' Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father.' I should say—let his light be, therefore, first *of works* ; that they may glorify the Father seeing that the

works of the sons are good. Let him do good to others, that they may say, ' If he being weak does good with such a great heart, what must not He do, who is the Father and omnipotent. Secondly, *of words* that they may glorify the Father in hearing him, and may say, ' If the words of the son, though a child, be so full of power and unction and sweetness, what must be the very Word of the Father who is the utterance of His Eternal knowledge.' Thirdly, *of thoughts* that they may glorify the Father by seeing what the apostolic man is in himself. For as a man's thoughts make his countenance, if they see the apostolic man serene in adversity and equal minded in prosperity, at leisure amid many things, at ease amid things most difficult, and joyful at all times, what will they say but ' See, if the ambassador be so blessed, what must be the King in His beauty ? ' for they are each in their measure ' perfect as their Father also is perfect.'

ANANIAS. Well said, Azarias, truly I own that my thoughts concerning apostolic men fell short, and that you have found the true type of what the apostolic man should be, verily the light of the world.

AZARIAS. I know, Ananias, that I have said enough for *you*, yet believe me, not one tenth of what might be said of the light of the world in the hearts of apostolic men. We might speak of it as the light of home, where the family are gathered round the happy hearth and welcome in the stranger from the darkness ; as the light of the schools where the flame of lesser minds is kindled at the greater ; as the light of the Sanctuary that draws the faithful soul to the altar, to the Light for the revelation of the Gentiles and the glory of the faithful people Israel.

PART III

THE THOUGHTS OF MISAEAL

MISAEAL. It seemed to me, yesterday, when we closed our conference, that all had been said, or at least suggested,

of what I had thought concerning the mission of the apostolic man, that I had nothing more to add, and that if he would think deeply of the 'light of the world,' he would have all that he needed for living his life as an apostle, pondering the words of the Master, 'you are the light of the world.'

AZARIAS. But on further reflection, Misael, I see that you thought otherwise?

MISAEI. I was moved to think otherwise, by the wish, at least, that I might not be silent to those that come after me, for it seems to me so great a privilege to speak *once* to those of the future, that I would not forego it, even if my thoughts should seem not worth the thinking, or my words not weighty enough for the breath that carried them.

AZARIAS. This is more like the plaintive note of our Ananias than of the blithe spirit of Misael. I have ever thought that Misael was our Isaias, our Evangelist as Ananias was our plaintive Jeremy. But speak, Misael, according to thy own bright thoughts and it may be that we shall call thee indeed, the golden mouth of the three.

MISAEI. In all simplicity then, it would seem to me that though he had said so much, Azarias had not yet said enough. He gave but a part, I too shall give but a part, yet another one, and out of many parts will be the whole. And I can not forget that there are apostles and apostles, just as there are prophets and prophets, diversities of gifts but the same spirit, star differing from star in glory, and thus the firmament so much more beautiful. I followed out still further the Master's words from those two first utterances on which you have dwelt, 'You are the salt of the earth, you are the light of the world,' and there is yet another thought, 'A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid.'

AZARIAS. And what is this, for apostolic men?

MISAEI. The city is a multitude of citizens, sufficient

to themselves as to living. Now when the multitude of soldiers are formed into an army, and the multitude of prophets into colleges, and the multitude of councillors into a senate, and the multitude of philosophers into a school (when they are so happy as to be at unity in doctrine), shall not apostolic souls unite with one another and form a city seated on a mountain, one and self-sufficing. This is what I thought, this is what I saw in the vision of the new order. For there an Apostle is twice an Apostle, when he comes from an ordered apostolic centre, when his strength is that of a number, endowing the one, and when the sufficiency of the whole is distributed according to the necessities and duties of each one. This is, as I think, what the Rules of the New Order have established and endowed with powers and rights and called ' Religious Orders ' for the making of apostles.

ANANIAS. I have, as I now believe, thought the thoughts of childhood. Not that I am a child after a manhood lived out in earthly probation followed by two thousand years of gathered experience in Limbo. But I have thought as a child, thoughts true but insufficient, true but crude, immature, partial, inefficacious. Azarias it seems to me has thought the thoughts of youth, living thoughts, and truer than mine, because less prejudiced and partial (yet mine in a sense were true). And Misael has thought . . .

AZARIAS. Mature thoughts, the thoughts of ripe age—for his vision of the city is matured, and it joins itself in my mind to many another thought of the spiritual city of which they say that the Apostles are but the foundation, that is the city of peace, the heavenly Jerusalem our Mother. I have seen it in type and figure, the strong Jerusalem on earth, the stronger and more lasting Rome which was, and is, and if I mistake not, is to come, so long as the order of this world is to last, and as Misael has said, in the Orders of religion in which apostolic men go forth in the strength of their city, and ' compel men to come in, that the great house

of the Lord may be filled for the marriage supper of the lamb.' I call the thoughts of Misael 'last thoughts.'

MISAEEL. So do I not, Azarias, not more than *later* thoughts. One thing is wanting to us yet, our Daniel, the man of desires, the man greatly beloved, our interpreter of dreams and visions. If we too were but men of desires, could we not draw him from his glory to be once more the interpreter of our thoughts.

AZARIAS. I feel sure of it, Misael. I have within me a conviction that our Daniel will come to us, if we breathe forth the whole strength of our souls in prayer, that he may come and interpret to us, concerning the salt, the light, the heavenly city.

PART IV

THE INTERPRETATIONS OF DANIEL

ANANIAS. O great Magician ! O Daniel greatly beloved ! O mighty interpreter of dreams ! We too have dreamed ; do thou interpret. We have thought ; do thou solve. We have prepared ; do thou bring us to a happy conclusion. We have perhaps reached the gates ; do thou open them, that those who are chosen for this life may pass through. Aid us, O great Daniel, for our thoughts are known to thee, make known to us thy interpretation.

DANIEL. I have heard the thoughts that were uttered before heaven, and loving earth as I still love it, have come as of old, to speak to those I love. My moments are counted and I leave to others the dignity of interpreting to the priests who minister at the Christian altar, and I will do this office to those who are teachers of others, and shall shine as stars for ever and ever.

I have heard your discourse of the salt, the light, the city seated on a mountain, and they were true, and it is to the citizens of that city that I would speak, in confer-

ence with you, and as the mouth speaks out of the abundance of the heart, I would say that the name I love best is that by which I was known on earth and would willingly give to all the citizens of that city. For there are *those* whose charge is of interpreting, and those who are to be the Apostles of youth must be to them as Interpreters. For youth sees many things 'through a glass, in a riddle, or in a dark manner,' and it is the charge of the Interpreter to bring it face to face with truth. Sometimes the veil is over the things themselves, which are hard to youth, and then the Interpreter, with master hand, may tear it away, and show the truth in all its beauty. But not seldom the veil is over the eyes of youth itself, or over the heart, and then must the Interpreter remove it with due care and reverence, and strengthen weak eyes and unstable hearts, to bear the vision of what they would not see. In this is the perfect Interpreter shown, for he must never go beyond his province as Interpreter. He stands between the One and the other, only to make the way easy to his children, and lead them on to their Master and his. He is to be the master of all, only that he may be the servant of them all.

AZARIAS. Expound unto us, more, O Master! how shall these things be, and what manner of man is the true Interpreter?

DANIEL. Let him be to his little ones first as a magician, in their tenderest years, to enchant them by showing page after page of the vision of the good, the true, the beautiful—murmuring his spells over the rugged way of learning, and showing it to be flowery—whispering the magic words and making the locked gates of difficulty fly back to show the treasure within, touching with his Enchanter's wand the stern drudgery of *duty*, and showing it to be *love*.

Then as they grow older, and the desire to *do* takes possession of the eager spirit and ferments in its growing powers, then let him be the Interpreter of action. Let

him not dictate but show the way. Let him show how true action is patient, not rash; constant, not fitful; earnest, not violent. Let him watch for the hour when the spirit expands, and direct its ardour, let him be vigilant to see when it flags, remembering that sadness is near of kin to the deadly sin of inactivity and sloth. Let him give heart by setting forth that impossibility is nothing more than inexperience, and that either wiser thought will show it to have been foolishness, or else that more patient or more strenuous action will make it possible. Thus let him lead from weaker to stronger effort, and ever himself go before only to show the way, being no more than the Interpreter and not the Master.

But when slowly and in course of years reason rises and takes her royal seat upon her throne,—not the *first* time which makes the child responsible, but the *second* time which begins to make him wise, then the Interpreter's great hour has come! Then let him gird himself to the task and become all patience, all understanding, all sweetness to his charge. Then let him show himself indeed a master to the struggling mind that is coming into being. Let him show himself so true a master, that as one has said, 'under the supposition of his displeasure no roses would seem worth plucking again.' Let him stand by in its moments of light to bid him 'ride on, go prosperously and reign'; but let him stand nearer still in the hours of darkness, when the untried spirit wearies in its efforts. Let him say to it that the hour of darkness is the true 'hour of incense,' '*hora incensi*,' to fling the censer and trim the lamp in the Holy of Holies, that the young mind may learn betimes to take its troubles and doubts to the Sanctuary; and, O ye three Children! when he has taught that lesson so that it can never be forgotten, then may he draw back and trust the soul to find and follow its Master, then may he know that life and death shall not divide them.

MISAEI. Leave us not yet, O Master ! answer but one question more. How shall the Interpreter become such a man ? Speak but once again of the means.

DANIEL. Yea, the means. A few more thoughts I, the Interpreter, have in trust for the Interpreters, and ye O three Holy Children will understand that though they are but little seeds of thought, yet in rich minds they may grow to rich trees. I have not to lay down again the rules of what you already know, that the Interpreter be wholly devoted to his Master, of one mind with him and familiar with his presence, that he care not for himself beyond that reasonable carefulness to make himself acceptable to his Master ; that for his Master's sake he love all others and especially his little ones, even to the laying down of his life, and dying daily for them. These things well known I only recall to your minds. But in those lesser things where one Interpreter may differ from another, and in order that these chosen ones *may be of the best*, I would that they should cultivate a threefold spirit, the spirit of mobility, the spirit of leisure and the spirit of prudence.

ANANIAS. Great Daniel ! the spirit of mobility ! and they have striven all their lives to anchor themselves, above all, in the very stability of all that is most stable.

DANIEL. In truth they have done well, Ananias, but this is a well-known and undisputed truth. The things so well known to all, it is not for us to interpret. Yet ! know you not that there is a double principle in all things and that both belong to the Interpreter who stands between the One and the other. It was the same mouth of Wisdom that said, ' answer a fool according to his folly,' and a little later, ' answer not a fool according to his folly,' and for both injunctions He gave good reason. It was the same Apostle that called himself ' unknown ' and ' known '—' sorrowful, yet rejoicing.' Say, Ananias, are there not in human things two truths apparently contrary yet both alike true ? Say, is not the earth stable, though in

swiftest motion ? Say, is not the Lord of Hosts younger than the youngest of His creatures, though He be the Ancient of days ?

ANANIAS. Yet in man to be ever mobile, seems to me to undermine his only little strength which is in his stability.

DANIEL. Hearken, Ananias. Let the Interpreter be so fixed and stable in his heart and will, that nothing shall draw them from their centre. But in mind and action, in kinship with all that is coming into being, let him be ever in the forefront, and let his secret be, to follow the ever-moving *present* ; richer to-day for the wisdom acquired yesterday, richer to-morrow for the experience of to-day. Since he is to be the servant of all and the Interpreter of youth, he may not be left behind, for if he stand still and fall back, then impatient youth will shake his hand from its shoulder and cry,—‘ This dullard, how can he know ? This singer who is ever a strophe behind the choir,—how can he unwind the harmony of the new music ? ’ Ananias, he who would *interpret* must first *know*. He must stand firm in the swiftly rolling chariot who would guide the steeds ; he must speak the language who would give the sense. This mobility is, as one has said—‘ an insight into all that the present moment holds in trust for us,’ as we stand so briefly in its presence. It is the ‘ ideal *now* ’ of the Cyrenaics of old, brought into subjection to the Christianity of to-day and ready for the hope of to-morrow, when to-morrow becomes to-day.

MISAEEL. And the counterpart of this mobility, O Daniel, is that the spirit of leisure ?

DANIEL. Even so, Misael, for the Interpreter must be ever at leisure for the charge that needs his attention. To be ever at leisure is to be ever at the disposal of others, unhurried, serene, disengaged from self. It is the ‘ perfect manner ’ in the reception of life, and it shows forth the true teaching ‘ that manners are a part of morals ’ as

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they of old knew, who had but one word '*mores*' for both, and as the moderns have now been forgetting for more than a hundred years. The Interpreter who is ever at leisure will be like the wise Emperor who determined 'not to make business an excuse to decline the offices of humanity, nor pretend to be too much occupied to concede what life with others may hourly demand.' Thus the spirit of leisure will make the attention of the Interpreter more pleasing to the young, than even the admiration, or the flattery of those who are hurried, fanciful, volatile as themselves.

AZARIAS. Yet one word, of prudence, O Daniel !

DANIEL. A last word, Azarias. . . . Let the Interpreter above all be vigilant and prudent, for he must learn what is more subtle than alchemy, and more hidden than all the secrets of all the arts, the art of treating with the soul of man, the highest wisdom of knowing what to expect, for as the wise Emperor said again : ' It is wisdom with men as with fruit trees, not to be exigent with them beyond their nature.' And prudence likewise will teach the Interpreter what is the fitting time for all things, for there is a time to be silent and a time to speak ; a time to laugh and a time to weep ; a time to plant, and a time to root up that which was planted ; a time to sow and a time to reap. And as to those Interpreters who have heard us, though perhaps they sow in tears, may they reap in joy, and if ' going they go, and weep, casting precious seed, may they come again with joy, bearing their sheaves with them.' The interpretations of Daniel are ended.

A 'WITENAGEMOT,' OR THE MEETING OF SEVEN WISE MEN

(MARCUS AURELIUS, *alone, in the attitude of thought and weariness. Enter WINDTHORST.*)

WINDTHORST. Aweary, my Emperor! What, Barbarossa! The flame still upon your beard and you awake? Aweary? Spent?

MARCUS AURELIUS. Not Barbarossa, little Excellency. You see I know you, though you mistake me, but it is not fair to twit you in this, for I watched from the height of the centuries and saw how you grew; and I may point out to your enlightened observation that my beard is golden and not flame-coloured, and that in all things corresponding I am of the same hue of thought. They could not leave the centuries in peace, you see, and here we are again, I weary with thought, and you spent with action.

WINDTHORST (*bounding to his feet*). Spent! I was cut off from my warriors with the spirit still whole in me. Ah! my Emperor, don't talk to a man of action of being spent. I can say that my thoughts and hopes and plans outgrew my body, it was never much to look at, but it served me well and my heart was whole and joyous. I could have struggled on for half a century more and not lost heart or breath.

Enter COVENTRY PATMORE.

PATMORE. 'So many worlds, so much to do,
So little done, such things to be,
How know I what had need of thee?
For thou wert strong as thou wert true.'

MARCUS AURELIUS. Yes, he was an indomitable warrior. Doubtless that is why he is called for this evening; he comes as the man of prudence, counsel and action.

WINDTHORST. I don't know what I come for, but if I can be of any use to my old Centre Party, or more privileged still can render any small service to Holy Church,—here I am!

PATMORE. No blows this evening, Sir. Peace to your ashes! Do you want to be fighting still? We have another mission to-day, but as your sword was that of the tongue you may, if needful, gird it on again. My instrument was the pen, but no matter; once we have passed into the great 'beyond' we can understand each other, and even make ourselves understood without such cumbersome weapons.

CARDINAL NEWMAN *comes up*.

NEWMAN. Am I to infer that we are to look upon ourselves as figures in some one's dream?

WORDSWORTH (*following him*). Or the trailing memories of our former selves?

BLESSED THOMAS MORE. Or returning voices to treat again of our own Utopia?

Enter the GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. Accept my apologies, Gentlemen, for my late arrival, these precincts are so new to me that I have come a considerable distance out of my way.

WORDSWORTH. And even now, Sir, you may be as perplexed as ourselves to determine what the precincts are. They appear to be some kind of monastic establishment. The inhabitants, who appear to be persons of some credit in the regions above, had the strange idea of begging leave of absence for seven amongst the number of the wise, and we were called from our planetary changes that we might, in accordance with their wish give them some

advice, founded on our own experience, on the art and manner of taking our life.

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. A most whimsical notion, Sir, as far as it concerns myself. My life had neither art nor manner. I *lived* in it, and should be hard put to, if you should ask me to give any account of how this was done.

NEWMAN. Probably this very characteristic is that for which your advice is valuable. A large proportion of the human race is, I believe, intended to live as you lived, practically without examination, but with full acceptance of the conditions of life, drawing its conclusions by what I have called the 'illative sense,' though without giving any account of it to themselves. Your whole mind vigorously seized upon the whole truth in its living, concrete reality, and without questioning, you set about putting it into practice. This is, although you never registered it as such, a very comprehensible manner of life. The logic of the Schools falls short of *life*. You have made short work of the logic, bounded across the chasm and attained it.

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. I cannot be said, Sir, to have bounded across the chasm, for I never perceived it. I must have lived all my life on the further side of it, for I never left the firm ground. I knew neither your crags nor your chasms, I never entered upon your pathless wildernesses, nor even knew of their existence until my arrival in another life, when I saw with amazement how many had been rescued from them, and how singularly tranquil had been my own career.

PATMORE. You must surely at times have been confronted by questions that you could not answer?

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. *Never.*

PATMORE. Trials for which you could see no explanation?

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. *Never a single one.*

PATMORE. Dispositions of Providence that seemed incomprehensible?

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. That was no matter for astonishment, since I knew it could not be otherwise. If the question admitted of no answer I never asked it at all. Why should I set myself face to face with one of your posers that would break the heads of the very Doctors of Divinity, and even Solomon in all his glory could not have pronounced upon? My trials, such as they were, praise be to God, called for no explanations; I had simply to bear them with all the fortitude I could muster, I had no spare thoughts to beat about the bush for the reason why. As to the decrees of Providence, what man in his sober senses would set himself to pry into these or pretend to understand them? This would, to my mind, have been unbecoming and even impertinent. And since I could make things no better by my enquiries, and might even make them worse, I let well alone.

NEWMAN. Then how did you take your life in hand and understand it?

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. I never took my life in hand at all, my Lord Cardinal, I took my day as it came, and all in the day's work.

NEWMAN. Did you never think?

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. Think! Bless your Eminence! Of course I thought. But the things I could not know, I never thought about. There is but a step from the thought to the wish, and is it not by the wish that we go wrong in covetousness?

NEWMAN. Undoubtedly; the wish to which we consent.

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. Then why should I wish to know what God has hidden from me? That is another sort of covetousness. It takes men off their duty too, and makes them unsettled and troublesome, both to themselves and to their neighbours. There is

something not right about it, my Lord Cardinal, and the Lord Almighty never meant these hard questions to torment us.

PATMORE. We shall need a ninth Beatitude, my Lord Cardinal, to express that happy condition,—‘Blessed are they that ask no questions for they shall never want for an answer.’ But how would our Gentleman of the Old School formulate his way of life?

NEWMAN. Not unsatisfactorily, since not at all! There is a great deal to be said for his manner of living, simple, direct, unperplexed. The life that one might envy if one did not feel it to be impossible. It is a gift to some, but to others not allowed.

PATMORE. Not even to be licitly desired. Is it sufficiently marked to be considered a way or manner of life at all?

NEWMAN. Yes, for it has its formula for meeting difficulties, as they arise. Apparently it rules life by the *Gift of Understanding*; a few first principles perfectly grasped, and the whole man held in silence before them. He sees the end, he sees, one, or two, or three luminous peaks, and he makes for these, leisurely and imperturbably. Oh! that many a fretful spirit might quiet itself with as good theology. It may not be attractive to your mind. You would fancy yourself a caged eagle. He is not, nor does he fancy himself one, and his doctrine is perhaps as good as yours, possibly better, possibly ‘his hands are quicker unto good.’ It is all a question of metaphors for many minds. *You* can work yourself into a fever in the face of a metaphor. If we were still in the time of probation and temptation I could at this moment move myself to tears, and possibly you also, by certain metaphorical views of life, pressing them far home, such creatures of imagination are we. Thus you would call yourself a caged eagle, and the sense of your lack-lustre eyes, neglected plumage and useless talons might induce a fit of melancholy, that not all the teaching of the

Fathers and Doctors of the Church would suffice to drive away.

PATMORE. Hence you would advocate plain speaking, and short views of life to keep the mental vision clear? Perhaps even you would hold with Sydney Smith in his six matter-of-fact remedies for nervousness. I fancy there is a widespread idea among those of his persuasion that all spiritual troubles arise from nerves.

NEWMAN. You make me say more than my words will bear out, and in fact I advocated in our good friend's name long, rather than short views of life, that is—looking to eternity rather than time—illimitable hope the measure of it and unconquerable trust the means.

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. Now, my Lord Cardinal, I never found myself so well expressed before, but thus rendered by your Eminence I feel that my position is impregnable . . . 'God's in His Heaven, and all's right with the world.' There's my motto, and you will find it hard to improve upon, either for truth or pith. I am quite prepared to stand by that, as my view of how to live one's life.

WINDTHORST. I have listened to all you have said with strict attention, and beg leave to differ from you entirely, —*in toto*.

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL. How so?

WINDTHORST. For incompleteness, for ineffectiveness, for alienation from the world-movement, for ease, that I cannot avoid calling selfishness, for mere negations,—*Du lieber Gott!* From what do I not differ from you in point of view?

PATMORE. 'Better are the wounds of a friend'—we have plain language now, though the Cardinal treated him so tenderly.

WINDTHORST. Yes, take us back to the time of the Patriarchs, and then live after your proposed manner, and you may hope to be forgiven, but even then, you will be the Patriarch Lot, and not the Patriarch Abraham.

Lot, the inert, who chose his valley home and dwelt therein, and merely 'grieved his just soul, from day to day, with their unlawful doings,' in his fashionable metropolis of Sodom, and who when the end came *saved* his just soul no doubt, but saved it alone, losing even his wife! That is what comes of your easy going, *laissez aller, laissez tomber, laissez faire, all will come right*, and the rest of it, feeble nostrums, that pose as the understanding of first truths. *Meine Herren!* as one of your own poets has said (it was America's poet, but no matter), and your children vaguely repeat, 'Life is real, life is *earnest*,' tell the good man to open his eyes and see that this is *true*. False pity and false patience, inert resignation and apathetic neglect,—*thus* I condemn him.

PATMORE. You have not lost the bray of the old war trumpet yet, little Excellency. Perhaps you would suggest to our good friend a patriarchal adaptation of his principle that might satisfy you and yet not go out of his depth. What of Abraham?

WINDTHORST. Abraham, Sirs, was a man, a Father, and a ruler, a 'High Father' and a noble ruler, soldier and pontiff. Remember that it was he who would ever be active while Lot was passive. 'Choose,' said he, and Lot chose the fat pastures and Abraham took the highlands; and it was Abraham who interceded for Sodom to the verge of insolence and presumption,—it was Abraham who, nomad chief, left his patriarchal repose, and like an avenging fire flamed up the Jordan valley after the five kings and rescued his helpless nephew, the poor 'just man.' It was Abraham who was called the Father of the Faithful, the pattern of believers, Abraham who talked face to face with God as a friend.

PATMORE. Yes, yes, very good as a panegyric, but give us a modern Abraham without breaking the mould or changing the shape.

WINDTHORST. Say, then, that he shall be patriarchal

in repose of spirit, and a man of the great solitudes by prayer. Let his trust in God be great enough for him to slay the son of promise with his own hands. Now you have understanding and trust, as far as you dare conceive them ; but by the side of that let him know all things human in the practical side, be ready with his own hands to take the calf from the herd, and dress it to entertain angels ; let him wash the feet of his guests and himself marshal his irregular troops for a foray in the mountains ; let him deal in all questions of buying and selling with Eastern dignity and aristocratic largeness as Abraham did, and remember, gentlemen, that if you want ease, dignity, repose and a stately movement above the level of this world, you must be Eastern, not Western, do not put the new wine into old bottles, do not mix your ideals, be one thing or the other *in toto*.

PATMORE. There cannot be the smallest doubt which the little Excellency himself represents. You are known, Excellency, to be an indefatigable worker, so we have no hesitation to ask you to go on talking, and by the side of Abraham's portrait to hang up that of your own ideal, and give us the sketch of the Westerner's manner of life, that is of your own.

WINDTHORST. Of the Teuton ? Of the German Teuton ?

PATMORE. Call it what you like, of your own manner of taking life.

WINDTHORST. My own manner of life as I *conceive* it,—but we must always fall short in the execution of our conceptions,—my own way of life—I say—is very simple. I take myself in the first person and you will distinguish in your mind how far I fell short of it. You need not think to offend me by so doing, I prefer straight speaking and hard blows. I am not exaggeratedly sensitive.

NEWMAN. As to sensitiveness, whatever may have been the texture of our sensitive covering, we are now

translated to where the most poisonous arrow goes harmlessly through us, so no account need be taken of plain and even trenchant speaking.

WINDTHORST. 'This then is my life (I say 'is' as using the historic present). God has given me a mission, and at the same time He has deprived me of many means usually considered necessary for a man who has to lead a party or a cause,—stature, presence, voice, glance. I was negatively gifted in all these ways, endowed with their contraries, and you will think born for failure,—a leader whose head could hardly appear above the table, whose voice could scarcely make itself heard, and so short-sighted as to be unable to see his own men, except at very close quarters. Thus it was made clear to me that I must seek the means *within* and not *without*. All the better !

No one could say that the Leader of the *Centrum* had piped or harped away the hearts and minds of his party by personal fascination. I knew that I must persuade, convince and execute. In the Centre Party we speak mind to mind and will to will, and take notice, Sirs, it is persistence of mind and will that has made the Centre Party indomitable in Germany. It is open neither to flattery nor to failure, it has never been either cajoled or intimidated. It knows its own mind. It speaks loud and smites hard. It prays and thinks and acts. It takes counsel with itself, it acts as a whole. The manner of its life is *Counsel and Action*, head and members forming one body. 'If you only care enough for a result you will certainly attain it.' This has been in practice the watchword of the Centre Party.

NEWMAN. The most consistent whole that the Church numbers amongst her battalions—counsel in the head, united action in the body. Among high practical ideals there is none that has had such marked features as your *Centrum*, or that gives a better lead to the modern Catholic. It makes use of all the favourite weapons of

its time, free speech, combination, journalism, and below them a foundation of those methods that are of all times—prayer, self-denial, and subordination.

WORDSWORTH. At the same time I cannot admit that this powerful modern machine has entirely destroyed the standing ground of our Gentleman of the Old School. All things human carry loss as well as gain within themselves. What you gain on one side you lose on another, and in the care that Providence has of the individual—the Father in Heaven of the sparrow—He has ordained means and ways of life for those to whom the weight and stress of the Centre Party would mean destruction. All are not able to receive its spirit; there must be civilians in the Kingdom of Heaven, as well as military men. There must be in the spiritual world men of learning, culture and science, as well as loud-voiced officers.

I admit that I am taking in hand my own defence as well as that of our good friend who has lapsed into silence. My mission is to the individual, and the individual admits of more finished perfection than the corporate whole. *There* is sufficient reason for his existence and cultivation even if no other can be found. Much as I admire the German *Centrum*, and I yield to no one in this admiration, I decline to be drawn into its corporate, connected action, and to sacrifice high solitudes for Roman roads. By all means let the *Centrum* march to victory with twenty brass bands to play before them, but let us come *after* them if you will, but not trampled to death by them, not annihilated. Let us speak to those who can hear us. 'The 'little Excellency' will listen to me without any ill-will. He must know that his work is incomplete. He makes war for the sake of peace that follows after. And when peace comes, other missions begin. Having established their rights men look into their own consciences, raise again their altars of worship, and begin to look beyond and above to the beauty of holiness. The stress of battle obliged everything to give way for the moment, men are

satisfied to know the day's duty and to do it, to satisfy the day's imperative needs.

But when the battle is over they ask for more, and the thinkers come again to the front—practical thinkers, yet profound. Then men are taught to bow down in holy fear and reverence before the God before whom they have somewhat noisily contended ; they find that the place on which they were standing is holy ground. The noblest fighting men are the most modest in their estimate of themselves ; they are quite willing to lay the foundations of fear as the beginning of Wisdom, and accept reverence as a manner of life, for reverence is the nurse of lofty thoughts ; those who look too closely at things lose their focus : the whole is destroyed by too much detail, scanning, scrutinising, and peering.

Holy Fear, which is reverence, says to them, ' Stand aside, stand back, keep silence, and *see*. Refrain from judging, be not over positive, give time and room in your thoughts.' And as you stand back again and again, then by degrees out of the confusion of detail rises the great and simple whole. Holy Fear gives back what subtle enquiry had robbed, the great outline, say, a mountain crowned with clouds that carry the glory of the West at sunset : in the morning veiled with the mists that lend to contemplation, and in the noon-day brightness towering above us, clear, snowy, unapproachable. In face of these the mind's first word is : ' How little am I before this greatness ' ; and its second : ' How great am I in God's sight since all this greatness is subject to me, made to bear me up, made to give me an organ by which I can praise its Creator and mine ; by me alone capable of singing its loud Benedictus.'

That, Sirs, is the work of Holy Fear, leading the soul to ' self-reverence, self-knowledge, and self-control,' hushing its too loud laughter, restraining its tears, and making it strong in silence.

MARCUS AURELIUS. The speaker was made to be a

Stoic Philosopher. Would that you had lived in my age, when we, so wearied of the 'golden mediocrity' of our time, turned to scale the heights and found none to lead the way. You might have been a guide to our souls.

PATMORE. No, Emperor, he knows how he fell short on earth of true guidance ; the guide was there in your time—the great Mother, the Church. You knew her sons and daughters—'fearless and unperplexed'—old men, boys, maidens and children. You know it now ; does it fill you even now, at rest, with regret ?

MARCUS AURELIUS. We may not regret ; what can we say, save that as it was appointed it was well. Not to have known, to have erred and done wrong, to have misunderstood, to have striven for the shadow and let the substance escape. Yes, I might grieve ; but here—where 'beyond these voices there is peace'—the regrets are drowned in the praise. Now all is ended well, our eyes have seen, and the knowledge vainly craved on earth has opened into the deeper knowledge that is eternal. I cannot regret ; the manner of my life may have been imperfect—yet all perplexed with questions, what could I do but strive ever after goodness. You know that I was inconsistent ; I know it likewise—glaringly, inconceivably inconsistent—are we not all so ? Was it more strange for me, blinded and perplexed in thought, to fail in deed, than it is for Christians to fall short of their ideal ? But God was very pitiful, and I found myself not condemned, not cursed, but counted among the seekers after God, taken in, weary and storm-tossed, and after long purification was not only accepted, but received from the hand of God, all blinded and overcome by it, the coronet of the Wise in the Kingdom of Heaven. Such is God's pity, and such His understanding of the souls He created.

BLESSED THOMAS MORE. Yea, that knowledge that feeleth after God and findeth Him was very near to

Wisdom even among the Gentiles to whom no revelation was granted.

PATMORE. And you must know, my Emperor, that our Thomas More is a very good judge of the excellent flavour of Wisdom. He has tasted of glory and the favour of Kings, tasted of culture and learning, tasted the untold sweetness of a Christian home, tasted of the joys of friendship, so it was no rude palate that was allowed to drink of the choice vintage of holy Wisdom. We know without any one to tell us that the way of his life was the way of the Wise, and his manner of receiving it, that of the most exquisite Christian taste.

BLESSED THOMAS MORE. Life is very real, Sir, to the ordinary man, and duty very plain. Much was said in my hearing after my death concerning the wisdom that was given to me ; it was God's gift. I owe Him thanks. When on earth my life never seemed to me anything but an ordinary day's duties, simple and imperative, to be done under the eye of God. I never saw two answers to the question before me. I saw duty very plainly, and as far as the weakness of man's nature allowed I loved my Maker and strove to do my duty. What He approved I loved, what He condemned I strove to avoid, and thus the joys of earth were not perilously sweet, nor its adversities unbearable.

PATMORE. But through all prosperity and adversity, through all the changes and chances of this mortal life, his heart was there, fixed where unchanging joy is to be found. Now I must say my own short word and leave the place of honour to the President of our strangely constituted assembly. Sirs, you will not think it presumptuous if I say that the way I saw life as possible was by fortitude, and my advice in life's questions is *courage*. 'What we have to gain is not one battle but a weary life's campaign,' and courage, enduring and persistent, is the needful gift ; courage to look into the blinding radiance of the sun, at the peril of our lives, for our eagle ancestry

has the right to let us drop from sheer contempt, if we blink at it. Fortitude to gaze with equal steadfastness into the blackness of the night. You understand me, Sirs, we live in an age where strong truths have to be veiled, so they think, from weak hearts that suffer shock and scandal therefrom. But not from the wise, truth makes them free indeed, light strengthens them, darkness cannot appal them. Truth is there, and life is flying while we seek it. There is no room or time for despair, there is no time not to be in earnest, there is no room for the faint-hearted in the Kingdom of God. There is an imperious 'thou shalt,' 'thou must,' within us that makes impossibilities possible. *I must*, therefore *I can*, walk over the heated ploughshares, putting my creed to the trial by ordeal; *I must*, and therefore *I can*, ignore all the tempting 'wilt thou?' and 'wilt thou not?' that beset my daily choice of the good and the better; *I must*, and therefore *I can*, reach the heroism of sanctity. This is the advice I would give to all who are beginning as well as to those who are in the thick of life's battle: 'love the inward tyranny of "thou must," and believe in the secret inspiration of "thou canst," and in the strength of those—fight, endure, abstain and overcome.'

NEWMAN. Scarcely anything remains to be said except that fortitude must have a companion in arms to make perfect its Christian knighthood, and that is piety. Fortitude alone may give the true Roman manner of life, the manner of the old Republic, but unless fortitude be joined with piety it is not Christian courage. Christianity asks both the rod and the flower, strength and sweetness. The Roman hero is the rod, the Christian martyr, old man, maiden, or boy is the flower, not only ready to endure evil, but made to see the Seer's vision through the circle of flames, and beyond the ring of the arena; bearing pain in ecstasy.

They who know not say that the age of vision is past, but the Church knows, and those who have seen can

know, that the enduring vision is given to those that love. They see beyond the grinding pressure of hard-featured toil, the beauty of daily life, the glory of immortal souls, they see hidden grace where the unloving eye sees only shattered nature, they see the footprints of God where others have lost his grace ; they say—‘ He is here—and here—and here,’ and they can show Him to those who like themselves can see. But the world cannot understand, and those that do not love cannot understand, ‘ their words seem to them as idle tales,’ and themselves optimists, dreamers, enthusiasts. So it has ever been, yet they may not desist from loving and hoping and crying aloud, by the imperious force within them they must go on, and sing their prophetic song and deliver their Gospel, for those who love are the Prophets and Apostles of the world, and the victory will be given them in the end.

Love goes beyond goodness or action or reverence or duty, or even fortitude. It leaves behind it Faith and Hope, for it sees and grasps, and what it lays hold of in this world, that it lays down at the feet of God hereafter in His kingdom.

CONGRESS
'ON THE FUNCTIONS OF CERTAIN WORDS'
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
(BY ONE CALLED 'NOW')

1908 will be remembered in England as a year of two Congresses, one the Pan-Anglican, and the other the Eucharistic Congress, which stand out respectively as typical of their churches, a subject upon which we need not enter here.

There was also an Exhibition, Franco-British ; to some it represents the acme of human effort in many branches, to others it was a pathetic revelation of many maladies of soul, perhaps rather of one malady with many phases, the disease of a jaded time, without inspiration, and seeking by artificial stimulant, in art and invention to replace the vigour of life and tone already too much worn, and requiring leisure to think rather than stimulus to produce. There were Head-masters' Conferences too, and other devices for bringing people together and exchanging ideas.

We asked ourselves, 'where did we come in?' Looking round upon the exhibition and the Congresses ; and in the end we decided to summon *our own* private conference, to see what helps towards living well we might gain by putting our thoughts in common, not in a six-day or even a one-day Congress, but a Congress of one hour only—the papers will be very few, the discussions short, but it is hoped that the papers may be fairly representative of the Nonconformist mind, the mind of the Idealist, and

that of the Professional. Although the papers appear to be limited to a very special and definite subject: 'On the function of certain words,' it is hoped that they will be found to be of fairly general interest and general application.

The first session of the Congress will now be opened by a paper on the word 'No,' read by a Nonconformist.

First Session.—Paper read by a Nonconformist

A serious responsibility has been laid upon me by the President of this Congress in inviting me to open the first session. The impulse of most speakers would have been, at least in the first moment, to decline the honour through modesty. I, therefore, thought it would be most becoming in me to accept, since my plan of life, as you will see, is based on this principle—*do as others don't*. For the sake of greater clearness the Congress will allow me to be frankly personal and even egotistical. I was born, not made—I was born to say 'no,' I cried 'no' from my cradle, I shouted 'no' in my nursery, I made 'no' my watchword on the school benches. When my father asked me to state my intentions as to a profession, I replied 'no.' He thought it was a refusal: it was merely a statement. 'No' *was* my career in life, it was my profession, my creed, my motto, my craft, my fulcrum, my leverage, my parliamentary programme, my objective, my product, my personal equation, my solution of life's problems, my point of vantage, and finally my *art of life*—that is why I am here to read a paper to-day.

'No,' then, may be an art of life. This is what I propose to show you. It is not merely destructive—on the contrary, it is an essential element without which there would be no possibility of vigorous life at all. If you eliminate 'no' from the art of life you destroy that which produces opposition in conduct, and friction in mechanics: you banish winter from the year, and night from its place

in the twenty-four hours, and the gnarled oak from the forest, and the bullfinches from the pastures, and the north-east wind from the atmosphere—everything, in a word, which stands for resistance and contradiction. You have taken their resources from the great dynamos whose friction gives you light and electric power : you have taken the string from the kite, the brake from the motor, the ballast from the balloon : you have emancipated the Modernist, and let the orthodox fall asleep in his arm-chair. What have you instead ? Eliminate ‘no,’ and you have the straight road, the poplar avenue, the metalled way, the uniform velocity, the ever vernal year, and so forth. I could go on indefinitely. As a consequence you will be unbraced and unprepared for any struggle, an army on a peace footing, asking peace and conformity at any price.

The function of Nonconformity in the art of life is an exceedingly delicate matter to treat in public, and since the pride of a Nonconformist lies in being outspoken, and I claim this right in virtue of the invitation of the President of the Congress, I hope that all Conformists and assenting spirits present will show themselves forbearing and even capable of entering into the views of a Nonconformist.

Nonconformity has a bad name in England at present, seeming to stand for something which is professedly religious and in practice merely political, for unfairness and intolerance, for Radical cries and a convenient conscience : it is believed to stand nominally for free discussion, actually for the gag, and to produce the spirit of universal negation. It is considered loud-voiced, vulgar, obstinate, heterodox, Philistine, possessing all the qualities which belong to that very objectionable being, a ‘tough customer.’ This appears to me to be a misapprehension of its true spirit and functions, and as time is limited I will confine myself to certain positive statements concerning Nonconformity, which may seem paradoxical, but for

which I beg the indulgence of the Congress and—a free discussion afterwards. I claim, therefore, that in the art of life:—

(1) Nonconformity is a relative and not an absolute term.

(2) Nonconformity is the reasonable protest of a minority and deserves to be heard.

(3) Nonconformity paints the shadows in the picture of life. The higher the 'Yes' the deeper the 'No' by contrast.

(4) Nonconformity is the spirit of the prophets, the martyrs, and confessors, while Conformity is that of patriarchs, doctors and virgins; the Apostles have to be now on one side and now on the other.

(5) Nonconformity in practice stands for the courage to say 'No,' with the odds against one.

(6) Nonconformity is a matter of temperament, inborn, and carried to the grave. You cannot blame a man for his red hair, or his black eyes, or his olive complexion, nor for all those qualities of which red hair, black eyes, or olive complexion are the significant symbols; tell him to control the forces, to correct the defects for which they stand, but not to eradicate them, for if he did he must 'wipe himself out of the book of the living' altogether.

PROFESSIONAL. I hope I may be allowed to congratulate the reader of this stimulating paper. I use the word stimulating with the purpose of emphasising what appeals to me as the special function of the Nonconformist spirit. It stimulates so strongly by opposition that under certain atmospheric conditions it may even produce a *general condition* of Nonconformity, and this is when it runs into excess—an excess of stimulant, of any kind, is to be avoided in practical life, and over-stimulation by opposition tends, by increasing the friction with which work is carried on, to a waste of power, and to the generation of heat which is damaging to the instruments in use.

IDEALIST. Is it a contradiction in terms or a statement of experience to say that the Nonconformist spirit is *over positive*?

PROFESSIONAL. Experience bears it out.

IDEALIST. One would like to arrive at the cause of this contradictory phenomenon.

PROFESSIONAL. Force engendered by narrowness, and directed by combativeness. Nonconformity is the religious designation of the spirit of contradiction.

NONCONFORMIST. This is too general a statement to be acceptable. Force engendered by conviction in the attitude of protest, the impetuous vigour of the 'no' disturbs the languid order of the 'yes,' and the one who is knocked down naturally complains of the destructive nature of the force which overthrew him.

PROFESSIONAL. The complaint to my mind lies rather in the fact that Nonconformity is both unscientific and unpractical. It is unscientific to be roused to protest by the first appearance of a statement, before the thesis has been fully developed. It is utterly unpractical to be roused to transgression by the laying down of a rule. Nonconformity as such, intrinsically, is unreasonable, disproportioned, and sterile; unreasonable, because its opposition is instinctive rather than grounded; disproportioned because it vexes itself unduly with things, where all that is necessary is a distinction and not a refutation; sterile because as soon as opposition is removed it expires. It may overcome, but it can neither govern, nor co-ordinate, nor lead to any definite end, nor produce.

I do not say that it is useless, it is even necessary, but always in a subordinate condition. It may not be eliminated, but it must be kept under, its function is to enhance good and favour its development by opposition; the moment that Nonconformity gains a majority or in any way secures an ascendancy, its influence for good is at an end, and it becomes a power for evil.

IDEALIST. It would seem that the Nonconformist is like St. Bernard's 'cross-grained religious,' worth his weight in gold, to be bought at a great price if not found ready-made, but it is to be desired, above all, that he should be alone of his kind, and each one may lawfully desire and pray not to be that priceless treasure of any Community.

NONCONFORMIST. Recognising my limitations, to be in the minority, to be a *unique* and disagreeable possession, I am willing to end the discussion with a positive statement which is a quotation from one who knew what it was to 'nonconform.' 'Passive happiness is slack and insipid, and soon grows mawkish and intolerable. Some austerity and wintry negativity, some roughness, danger, stringency, and effort, some 'no, no,' must be mixed in it, to produce the sense of an existence, with *character* and *texture* and *power*.'

CHORUS OF NONCONFORMISTS

As Nonconformists we were born,
The sound of 'yes' we hold in scorn,
With stubborn will and mind in strife
Our function is to buffet life.
Sing 'no' against the rising tide,
Sing 'no' and forth to battle ride,
Be few, be one, against the foe,
And grip the broadsword 'no, no, no.'

No peace for us, no pipes of Pan,
With us is found the fighting man,
The valiant few are on our side
Who ever have the world defied.
Sing 'no' when all the odds are cast
Against us, and we stand the last,
Sing as to martyrdom we go
A nonconformist 'no, no, no.'

But yet we own, we must be few
 That one is quite enough, or two,
 To keep the 'corps d'élite' alive,
 The utmost would be four or five.

And if the choice is left to you
 To be those priceless one or two,
 A nonconformist spirit show
 And answer stoutly 'No, no, no!'

Second Session.—Paper read by an Idealist

It was said of Herbert Spencer that 'he could not bear to think with the majority, the dissidence of dissent was in his bones.' A brief character touch was thus given which certainly described the man, but might also be taken as the true expression of the Nonconformist ideal, set forth, as advantageously as it might be, in the paper to which we listened in the last session. Coming next in order after that energetic and militant speaker, I own to feeling some hesitation in bringing forward my thesis, and doubt if it can make up even by its own persuasiveness for the absence of what I may call 'physical force,' which is, in a world of strife, to many, the last court of appeal in persuasion. If an opponent protests with such vigour as to knock me down, for the moment the King's highway is his.

And yet, for the love of the art of life, I will set aside this natural hesitation and not only bear in mind, but put before you all, the opposite attitude of mind to that of our Nonconformist friend, and that is the assenting attitude whose shortest expression is in the word 'Yes.' I entirely agree with the last speaker in his statement that he was Nonconformist by birth, temperament, and perhaps heredity. Men are born assenters, if we may create the word, or dissenters, or rather minds come thus into being, Catholic, may I say, or Protestant. This statement is likely to rouse opposition since the Congress is all Catholic. Nevertheless the fact must be faced, it is a matter of *mentalité*, the word is necessary, but not

yet naturalised in England. We have only to look round each one among their own group of acquaintances and friends to see that they are temperamentally and permanently on the side of assent or opposition. It may go by race, by blood, by long historical processes or by local circumstances, but so it is. The oddest formula in which the two were ever involved was the name adopted in England by a militant party one hundred years ago, as 'Protesting Catholic Dissenters.' Let any one try to assume that mental attitude, and he will see that there is only one nation in the world which could have invented such an anomalous title and only its strength of sheer muscle enabled it to preserve equilibrium on so ridiculous a base.

The Assenter, that I may not delay you by any further digression, the Assenter takes hold of life on the side of 'Yes,' and in the swirl of the current of time, all that hopes ultimately to survive must cling to this 'Yes.' For 'Yes' survives in the other life, eternity is an everlasting assent, the door has been shut on 'No' for evermore. 'No' is only for times and seasons, 'Yes' is for ever. To this it may be objected that in heaven there will be *no* separation, *no* error, *no* regret, but this is a play on the thoughts of earth, for such things will have passed away as though they had not been, and their survival is only a remembrance to enhance the assent of eternal union, the assent of eternal truth, the assent and concord of the everlasting Alleluia. But heaven must not too soon attract us away from earth. To-day we have to defend 'Yes' as the word of the Church upon earth.

To understand it well the word must be separated from its too homely associations, the y.e.s, which is a working man's dress, girt on to it for the rough wear of daily life. 'Yes' is not that, it is far more than that. It is an ideal and the word of ideals, but it travels incognito, like the truths of faith. Idealists and seers are men of yes, and here again I am in agreement with the last speaker that

to the men of yes belong the patriarchs, doctors, and virgins, all of whom are idealists, the patriarchs idealists in contemplation, the doctors idealists in truth and the Virgins in supreme love.

Will the members of the Congress have patience to let me set forth the functions of 'Yes' in human life? In its highest use and function we shall discern its nature, and from thence descend to its practical use in the world of everyday experience.

Its inmost function is to serve as the basis of thought. Experimentally, the members of the Congress will find that their highest and best thoughts, if followed to their very origin, are based upon some positive, immovable assent. 'Yes' is their central support. 'The ultimate support of life is thought,' says Cardinal Newman, 'it sustains when all else fails.' (His Eminence says this, it may be remarked by the way, in speaking of *Martyrs*, who although they died in appearance for a 'no,' in reality based their resistance upon a 'yes.') The thought that is your ultimate yes, your final assent, that is the ideal of your life.

Thus :

' The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow.'

These are three ultimate thoughts, three assertions of 'yes,' three ideals: the glory of the unattainable *which yet shall be given to us* ; the glory of the future which will surely succeed to the effort in which we now strive ; the glory of that which is intensely alive and real though as yet invisible, and that is heaven awaiting our faith and hope. We say positively 'Yes, *that is, that shall be,*' and already by that 'yes' it has become a very part of ourselves.

The outward function of 'Yes' is seen in the art of

serene and noble living, which in the absorbing interests, imperative duties and the instant need of the moment is in danger of becoming a lost art. If I may be allowed to make a comparison, its loss would be to the world, like that loss which we have been deploring for centuries, the secret of adapting a building for sound. We know how many irreparable disasters have occurred for want of this, when the finished building stands in its fair proportions and the orator's voice is heard as piping, or hooting, or sighing, or rising to a roar like a cataract, but without human articulation. Such a failure is there in many a noble building of moral virtues, it has all, *except* that which makes it articulate and acceptable to the race. All except the affirmation, the central yes, the assent which calls forth the assent; in other words the element of consideration, and fusion, and unity, the manner which upholds and unites, rather than the manner which dissolves and repels. In this lofty sense yes is a renunciation of certain personal rights, a restraint of some personal force, a sinking of all selfish resonance, from which comes a higher articulation, and the expression of a Christ-likeness that crosses the borderland of the natural world, and gives, if I may so call it, the manners of the heavenly court even on earth. I may seem to the Congress to have reached a degree of exaggeration in praise of this assent to all that is good which is shown by manners, but in the discussion which is now to follow, we shall certainly arrive at some general conclusion which does not go beyond the bounds of truth and circumspection.

NONCONFORMIST. It will be expected by the Congress that I, as representing the theory most directly opposed to the last speaker, should come forward to maintain the opposite view—and, in fact, I feel it to be my duty to do so—by pointing out that the wear and tear of modern life does not leave leisure for such assenting idealism, that it is an age only for hard blows, that no one understands anything but plain speaking in our times, and that appeals

to the ideal, however affecting, are lost upon the ear, *gross* if you will but still the actual ear of to-day.

PROFESSIONAL. In the world of fact, however, 'Yes' is as explicit a word as 'No,' and in the plain matters of daily life it is even more effective. 'No' is for 'yes,' and not 'yes' for 'no,' as war is for the sake of ultimate peace, and not peace for the sake of ultimate war. The Idealist member who has just sat down has perhaps carried us so far beyond the working-day world that his high notes were beyond the compass of your ear, perhaps of mine too, and we must bear in mind that the flowers and the fruits of assent belong to a region of fulfilment which is beyond our range. At the same time there is a region of 'Yes' which is within our range and in this region the word is exposed to certain dangers which must be guarded against. The dangers principally of lassitude and indolence and *laissez faire*, of detachment reaching to the degree of too great remoteness; of impersonality and unresentfulness carried to an extreme which would impair the true conduct of life. But it seems to me that we must grant that the side of 'Yes' has more to bestow than the side of 'No.' And as the test of practical experiment is to my mind the supreme court of appeal in these things, I should suggest that a practical test should be applied in setting on foot two missions in neighbouring parishes, of which the keynote in one should be 'No,' and in the other 'Yes.' I am inclined to think that a band of Apostolic affirmatives would win more minds and hearts than the band of holy 'No's'—and I think practical America with its school for the 'eirenic method' in controversy, is on my side in this question.

THE SONG OF 'YES'

When shall every weary question,
 Answered at last,
Cease to vex the mind's reflection,
 Answered at last?

When shall every 'Yes' be truly
Said, and every 'No' unruly
Closed with affirmation duly
 Answered at last ?

When the longing of creation,
 Answered at last,
For its long-desired salvation,
 Answered at last,
Everlasting thanks returning,
Lays aside the 'No' of mourning,
With its dumb and endless yearning
 Answered at last.

Then the guiding Holy Spirit,
 Answers at last,
With the truth which we inherit,
 Answers at last.
Faith assents while sense is failing,
God's eternal 'Yes' prevailing,
Heaven its longed-for light unveiling,
 Answers at last.

Third Session.—Paper read by a Professional

PROFESSIONAL. It is a difficult thing for a practical mind to attempt to capture the attention of an audience for whom a kite has been flown so high as we have heard it in the last paper. I must ask the Congress to bear in mind that I make no attempt to live in the transcendental regions to which we have been transported, and that my only claim to be heard now is a persistent determination to keep my feet firmly on this earth, and my head above my feet. The art of life as it appears to me is summed up in a word of two letters,—*Do*—nothing could be briefer, but the excellences of that word are known only in the experience of its effects. The law of labour is in the natural order the salvation of the world, and among many aspects of it,

which might be put forward, I will take only one and invite your careful consideration to this. All other aspects, if you have seized this one, will speak for themselves in due time. The aspect which I wish to put before you is that of the formula judged by its fruits, the effects of *Doing*. You have seen, we have all seen from time to time and mourned over, the fall of some lofty intellect from truth. On considering the antecedents of the fall it will often be found that it was precisely for want of *doing* that the equilibrium in *thinking* was lost. Take as fine a mind as you will and set it completely free from the cares and hard realities of life, give it leave to expand to the full its powers of speculative thought, give undisturbed time and unlimited resources, provide for every want, so as to remove every distracting care, let no business worry or domestic anxiety trouble that mental atmosphere, and I venture to predict that you will witness an intellectual deterioration, or a gradual failure of balance and will-power, if not a complete fall, or at best the development of a freak. Sanity, consistency, vigour of life will be lost, and a learned incompleteness is the best that is left to hope for. But if you allow the realities of life in any form to play upon that mind, it is saved from itself, and preserves its balance. So one man is saved by his family, another by the poor, another by any urgent duty that controls his life, and here in passing I may say that professional duties stand highest as means, from their dignity and the pressure of responsibility which accompanies them ; they, in the most real sense, *civilise* a man, and make him fit for the society of his fellow-men. As an instance of the recognition of this truth, consider St. Ignatius Loyola's insistence upon serving in the hospitals, and teaching little children their religion, as a mental and moral discipline for his theologians at the Council of Trent. He believed in manual work, making the beds and sweeping the rooms of the sick, and the patient labour of instructing the ignorant and the *stupid*, and by these means

he gave balance to their flight when they extended the splendid breadth of their theological wings.

Again, take two men, born to fortune and leisure, of whom one takes his life as it comes, as fortune and leisure have made it, and the other makes use of fortune and sacrifices leisure in the service of his fellow-men, and makes of his life an earnest voluntary 'Do'—then express to yourselves in words the acquired characteristics of each as they reach later middle life, or old age.

Again, consider two types of the working man. The two types are, speculative and professional; the first attends meetings, makes speeches, acquires many theories on political economy, and little by little passes from the dignity of the working man to the doubtful platform of the talking man; the other works for his master ('employer' is the term more in favour), gives his leisure to his home, and as the years go on becomes one of the finest and most dignified expressions of human nature.

One more example: take the boy graduate, leaving the University with honours, possessed with the unperturbed conviction that he is the light of the world, the very salt of the earth (to a professional mind frankly ridiculous be it said in passing), and set him where the hard facts of life will pelt upon him, where his most strenuous mental effort can barely keep pace with the instant requirements of his duty—put him among the men of practical experience, who have to make him work—and in a year the work of the world has made a man of him. A definite aim and a sense of fact have braced up his whole nature, humbled his eccentricities, pruned his views, and communicated the one thing necessary to his thoughts, which is—*reality*.

These instances will serve as illustrations of my meaning, your own observation will add to them by the score. The only principle which I wish to impress upon your minds is that we must deal with *life* primarily, and not with the mind alone, and dealing with life means making

the best out of the present situation, good or bad, just as it is and with the means at our disposal, so that with it, or through it, or in spite of it, we may go onwards to the end towards which we are striving, and I consider that this is what the Church calls 'so passing through things temporal that we lose not those that are eternal.'

NONCONFORMIST. There is a great deal in that paper with which I am in sympathy, in fact the only thing from which I must dissent is that work is a better restorative for the over-speculative mind than contradiction. The thing that undermines the power of the secluded scholar in his study is the absence of contradiction; work may have the effect of taming and cutting his wings, but only contradiction and free discussion can beat his mind into shape—in the heat of contention he becomes malleable, and is then saved from too much acquiescence in himself.

IDEALIST. In the name of my party I should wish to express my obligations to the exponent of the 'Do' school, which seems to me to be a happy application in the concrete of the ideals which I tried to support under the abstract formula of 'Yes.' The very force of the word 'do' is opposed to discussion, so I venture to propose that we leave the subject there.

THE SONG OF 'DO'

A word for every daily task,
And daily duty we would ask,
We need not any further go,
Our consecration is *To do*.

All Christian people, day by day,
At eve and morn are taught to pray,
With duties ended or begun,
'Thy Will *be done*, Thy Will *be done*.'

VIRGINS—WISE AND OTHERWISE

(*A Modern Cinderella*)

SCENE I

THREE SISTERS IN CONVERSATION—ACTION,
KNOWLEDGE AND EMOTION

ACTION. Do you know anything about the affair of the ' Sphere ' that is coming off in the House of Wisdom, and to which we are invited ?

KNOWLEDGE. Only this morning it has dawned on me that a ' Sphere ' is what people in the last century used to call a *ball*, but instead of dancing with the body, which is of course an antiquated piece of folly, they dance *with* the spirit, and *in* the spirit.

EMOTION. And what does the body do ?

KNOWLEDGE. As far as I understand the body goes in fancy dress, and tries to keep up with the spirit.

EMOTION. And what do they dance ?

KNOWLEDGE. Chiefly spiritual minuets, but some old dances are to survive at least as to their names, the Logician's reel, the Controversialist's sword-dance, and so on, but I believe these are not very much in vogue. The positive is generally preferred to the controversial. I think the fancy dress is supposed to be one that shows the *attitude of mind*. How shall we go ?

ACTION. If I summed up my present attitude of mind it would be as *smitten with a love of the impossible*.

KNOWLEDGE. Very good, then you can wear in your hair a proposition of Euclid turned inside out, and trim

your robe with all the things that can never be, square circles, mysteries explained, etc., that would be very telling.

ACTION. You quite misunderstand my attitude of mind. I mean the practically impossible. What attracts me is the unattainable in man, the contradiction of all natural qualities, and substitution of their contraries. Suppose a check of which all the blacks are white and the whites black. What have you then?

EMOTION. Check as before, but the other way? How can any one tell the difference?

ACTION. By putting themselves in the contrary attitude and trying to rouse you. As long as you even flicker you have not attained the impossible.

KNOWLEDGE. Half the people there would take you for the spirit of contradiction.

ACTION. Those who are aiming at the impossible must be in contradiction with many received opinions, but on the whole I incline more to that absolute evenness of effort which would be best represented by a uniform colour.

EMOTION. The particular shade of white which is called 'oyster.'

ACTION. Not at all.

KNOWLEDGE. I suggest that peculiar green or yellow which is proper to locomotives. This attitude of mind is indicative of mechanical energy more than anything else, a steam hammer, for instance, which adapts itself indifferently to straightening a crooked pin or crushing a ton of ore. For the human agent you may put it outside the sphere of practical politics, it is the impossible.

ACTION. That is the very point of it.

KNOWLEDGE. It is all very well to be smitten with a love of the impossible, but in the House of Wisdom I doubt whether it will go down, and as the object of the 'Sphere' is to find favour in the eyes of the Prince of the

House of Wisdom, I doubt whether your garment will prove a success. It savours of exaggeration.

ACTION. What would best represent *pressure* in a dress ?

EMOTION. *Tightness.*

ACTION. Not suggestive enough.

KNOWLEDGE. Or too suggestive ? eventually the seams crack. That is what would happen.

ACTION. I can't give up that idea of evenness of effort, equality in work under all circumstances.

KNOWLEDGE. Could you not express it in a more graceful form ? A straight robe, falling in symmetrical folds, with some freedom of motion underneath ?

ACTION. There is no idea of pressure in that. Now my idea of myself is pressure. Pressure continual, pressure increasing, pressure at all times, pressure from within to meet pressure from without, pressure to the very verge of a catastrophe. That is what I call evenness, for it never slackens.

KNOWLEDGE. Till the catastrophe comes, but *then* once for all. So be it, then, if that is your attitude of mind you must express it. You cannot do otherwise. Only I beg of you don't *crack* at the 'Sphere' or the family prospects will be blighted for us all. I suppose Emotion will be equally startling in her get-up.

EMOTION. I cannot quite make up my mind whether I shall go in flame-colour, 'as scorched with extremes,' extremes of feeling I mean, and that is rather young and commonplace, or in a quiet sort of sick-room tone, representing *reaction* and the wearied effort to attune oneself to the new life. What attitude of mind does that suggest to you ?

KNOWLEDGE. *Shattered.*

EMOTION. Exactly so. That is the logical outcome of my life.

KNOWLEDGE. But you surely do not see the Prince of the House of Wisdom awarding the crown either to a

candidate on the verge of a catastrophe from undue pressure or one already *evaporated* from over boiling? What are we coming to?

EMOTION. Nobody knows what we are coming to. But we are together in the forefront of whatever it is; a great movement, but no one can say in what direction. There is no denying it we have fine features and strong family likenesses to our ancestors whose portraits, remember, are in the House of Wisdom, 'time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barac, Samson, etc.,' and those of my side of the family also, Jonathan, Jeremias and others.

KNOWLEDGE. And I too; you will be pleased not to forget that I am your third and indeed your senior, and of the family portraits most like King Solomon. The attitude of mind in which I intend to dress is 'athirst for the unknowable.'

ACTION. Why the unknowable rather than the unknown?

KNOWLEDGE. Ask yourself similarly, 'why the impossible rather than the "yet unaccomplished"?'

ACTION. It is so stimulating.

KNOWLEDGE. So is the unknowable, when one has a thirst for knowledge.

ACTION. But it is so unreal.

KNOWLEDGE. What about the impossible?

ACTION. That is only unrealised, not unreal.

KNOWLEDGE. Then it should not be called the *impossible*, but you the *impotent*.

ACTION. And you the *ignorant*, 'Knowledge puffeth up.'

KNOWLEDGE. No, I go further than your ken. I thirst for the intrinsically unknowable, you only love the practically impossible. It is the intrinsically unknowable that really wears one to the knife-edge.

EMOTION. And is *that* what you find really desirable in life?

KNOWLEDGE. Both for Action and for myself the measurement of life is *wear*. We do not think that we truly live unless we keep at that pitch that one turn more of the wheel means collapse.

EMOTION. But is life so measured, your end? I understood that it was wisdom? What is the prize at the 'Sphere'? The crown of life or the crown of wisdom? If it were the crown of folly I should be puzzled to award it justly between you. But you are growing exaggerated and I am growing tart. Settle quickly about your robe and let us be off, for how the mental milliners are to work out these fancy compositions is a mystery to me.

KNOWLEDGE. I am tired of the fancy dress in which people usually attire me, a nebular robe with a star on the forehead.

EMOTION. Put on puffed sleeves to show that you have mastered that text of St. Paul.

ACTION. The attire of a beggar to show your unworldliness and *hunger*.

KNOWLEDGE. Not a bad idea. 'Knowledge in rags, crowned with Wisdom.' That makes a picture.

EMOTION (*aside*). It is pathetic to see her so sure of the crown when I know she is doomed to disappointment. I can see her face when the Prince turns to me saying: 'The truest Wisdom is *here*,' while Action falls into a final collapse. (*Aloud*) What about the child Cinderella, is she going to the 'Sphere'?

ACTION. Of course not, to make a show of herself and us. Ring her up that we may explain it to her.

Enter CINDERELLA.

ACTION. Look here; we are going to a 'Sphere.'

CINDERELLA. Yes.

ACTION. But you don't know what that is and you cannot go.

CINDERELLA. Never mind, I can help you to get ready.

ACTION. I don't see that you can do much in that

way, it is rather out of your line, poor child, it is a pity for you that you don't understand things more.

CINDERELLA. Never mind me.

ACTION. Life is growing so complex even for me, I can barely stand its pressure, what would it be for you who never leave your chimney corner if you were suddenly flung into it. What *should* you do?

CINDERELLA. I suppose I need not know what I *should* do until I have to do it.

EMOTION. What will you do while we are at the 'Sphere'? Shall you cry at being left out in the cold and all alone in the dark?

CINDERELLA. No, I never mind the cold, and it is bright enough inside.

KNOWLEDGE. You will see pictures in the fire and dream dreams.

CINDERELLA. No, I shall think and pray and work, there is plenty to mend and I will unwind your tangled skeins of silk. And if there is time over I shall just *wait*. That is something to do when there is nothing else.

EMOTION. Poor thing, what a dismal existence!

KNOWLEDGE. What a problem!

ACTION. What a failure!

SCENE II

THE VISION OF CINDERELLA

(*Cinderella alone at needlework.*)

CINDERELLA. 'What a failure! What a problem! What a dismal existence!' So they said and they know a good deal. I can't say it *troubles* me, for I don't see why anything should trouble one, but one can't help a sort of impression, a shiver at being left out in the cold, as they said, and in the dark. It all sounds so bright, the minds, and the attitude and the dancing and the Prince and the crown. But I don't understand anything about it. Con-

tent? Am I content? 'Forsake desires and thou shalt find rest.' The most sensible thing would be to go to sleep. The most sensible but not the most heroic. (Heroic, I to talk of heroic!) There is a spectre here to-night. I am not alone. If I go to sleep, the spectre stays, and if I stay awake I have to struggle till it is laid. I have felt the question of discontent within me and now it must conquer me or I must conquer it. I will at least look it in the face. What is my life? A dismal existence, a problem, a failure, so say my sisters. If I had been born in another station of life, I might have had a decent but inglorious future as a scullery-maid at £12 a year. As it is I am my sisters' unsalaried scullery-maid, without the £12 a year, or the possibility of giving warning. Suppose when they come back I stand up and curtsy and say: 'Ladies, I am leaving your service to better myself!' it would not be hard to 'better' myself, but oh! the truth, the truth that shines within. Cinderella, don't you know that you are talking nonsense to yourself? Talking the world's talk, narrow and sordid and jealous, 'splenetic, personal, base, a wounded thing with a rancorous cry,' because I have not got what others have, which is green jealousy, and because others have got what I have not which is yellow envy. O Cinderella, what is life and what are you?

VOICE OF FAITH. Cinderella!

CINDERELLA. Who spoke? Call again!

FAITH. Cinderella!

CINDERELLA. Who are you? Speak.

FAITH. Cinderella, I am Faith who held you at the baptismal font. I heard all your dreary thoughts, and have come to help you and to open your eyes. But first let me examine you, for if you do not know your Christian doctrine, I can do nothing for you, but if you answer well, then we shall see; come now, answer me, what are you?

CINDERELLA. I am a Christian.

FAITH. And what is a Christian ?

CINDERELLA. A follower of Christ.

FAITH. And who is your head ?

CINDERELLA. Jesus Christ, crucified.

FAITH. And who is His Mother ?

CINDERELLA. The Mother of Sorrows.

FAITH. And what is His way ?

CINDERELLA. The Way of the Cross.

FAITH. And who are His friends ?

CINDERELLA. Poverty, Suffering, and Humiliation.

FAITH. And who are His Apostles ?

CINDERELLA. Those who have left all and followed Him.

FAITH. And who are His Princes ?

CINDERELLA. The poor whom He finds on the dunghill.

FAITH. And who are His cup-bearers ?

CINDERELLA. Those who would taste the Chalice of His Passion.

FAITH. And who are His statesmen ?

CINDERELLA. Those who have buried themselves in His hidden life.

FAITH. And who are His treasurers ?

CINDERELLA. Those who have nothing.

FAITH. And who are His mighty men ?

CINDERELLA. Those who are obedient unto death.

FAITH. And who are His wise men ?

CINDERELLA. Those who know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

FAITH. And who are His crowned heads ?

CINDERELLA. Those who persevere with Him in His temptations unto the end.

FAITH. Very good, at least your principles are right, so I have hope of you. Do you wish to go to the 'Sphere' ?

CINDERELLA. What should I do at the 'Sphere' ? I do not know how to behave.

FAITH (*severely*). When any messenger from Heaven speaks to a soul, it is exceedingly bad manners to answer one question by another, and not to speak direct to the point. I see your manners have been sadly neglected. Now look me straight in the face, sit up, and listen to what I say. I said just now—do you wish to go to the ‘Sphere’?

CINDERELLA. No, it is no use for I do not know how to behave.

FAITH. You need not repeat a second time you do not know how to behave, for it is only too evident that you do not. If I were to tell you how to behave, should you wish to go?

CINDERELLA. It is impossible, they have all gone there already and I should not know how to get there.

FAITH. You have not been asked anything about conditions and circumstances. My unfortunate god-daughter, your mind and soul are wholly undisciplined. Listen to me. It is a great responsibility to present you at the ‘Sphere,’ yet if you will hold fast to three simple rules I will undertake to do so, and more than that I will promise that it shall be for your spiritual and eternal welfare.

CINDERELLA. I promise it, you have never deceived me. What are the rules?

FAITH. Listen to what is said to you.

Believe what you are told.

Do exactly as you are bid.

CINDERELLA. Indeed, that is an easy undertaking, I have done all these things all my life long.

FAITH. You have broken all three in the very few minutes’ conversation I have had with you. You know *practically* nothing of the spirit of these rules.

CINDERELLA. I always do as I am told.

FAITH. There is a breach of Rule No. 2—you do not believe.

CINDERELLA. I thought you said I disobeyed.

FAITH. Breach of Rule No. 1—you did not listen. What did I say ?

CINDERELLA. That I knew nothing of obedience.

FAITH. No, that you knew practically nothing of the spirit of the rules. Now go quickly to your room and dress.

CINDERELLA. I have no other clothes than these.

FAITH. There goes Rule No. 3—I knew we should not wait long for it to follow the others. Own to me frankly, god-daughter, that you are inexperienced and ignorant of how to listen, to believe and to obey.

CINDERELLA. I own it, but until now I had no idea of it whatever.

FAITH. Own that you know nothing of their spirit.

CINDERELLA. I know nothing about their spirit.

FAITH. Are you convinced of this ?

CINDERELLA. I am.

FAITH. Will you attend to what is said, believe what you are told, and do as I bid you for the rest of the evening ?

CINDERELLA. I will.

FAITH. Go to your room, then ; you will find the robe I have prepared for you, and in which you will be quite fit to appear, a robe of docility, a veil of modesty, a pair of cardinal red slippers, temperance and fortitude, and one single jewel which I cut myself to many faces,—the diamond of reflection. Put these on without looking at yourself in the glass. I undertake the rest.

CINDERELLA. I am afraid of not being perfectly dressed, you will be ashamed of me ; I have been working in the kitchen, my face and hands are ingrained with kitchen dirt, my hair is full of cinders. I am, as you know, Cinderella.

FAITH. Is this a specimen of your obedience and observation of the rules ?

CINDERELLA. The force of habit, I beg your pardon.

FAITH. Own again that you have broken all three ;

you were inattentive to what I said—you did not believe that I undertook the responsibility of the whole thing—you stopped to argue instead of obeying.

CINDERELLA. I own it, I was inattentive, incredulous and disobedient. I should not have believed this of myself. I thought myself the most docile of mortals.

FAITH. Now listen. If you had a true and attentive ear, I should not have to recall you so often to be on the alert. When you are dressed, get into my carriage which is at the door. In a moment you will find yourself at the House of Wisdom, the 'Sphere' will be going on, and you will take part with the rest. You will dance every dance for which you are asked, and will remain until twelve o'clock.

CINDERELLA. How shall I announce myself at the door? I can't take any part, for I don't know how to dance.

FAITH. Own once more, god-daughter, that you know nothing of the spirit of attention, faith or obedience. I said you would find yourself *in* the House of Wisdom, not at the door. That you will dance, therefore you are to believe that you will know how to dance, that you will take part with the rest, to which your obedience replies, 'I can't take part.'

CINDERELLA. I own it again, I am lazy in attention, weak in faith, imperfect in obedience. But this is the end. I will listen, believe and obey. What did you say about twelve o'clock?

FAITH. How did you listen?

CINDERELLA. I own that I listened imperfectly and insufficiently.

FAITH. I said that you would remain until twelve o'clock. On the first stroke of twelve you will retire.

SCENE III

THE 'SPHERE'

(Enter CINDERELLA. FAITH receives her.)

FAITH. At least this time you have obeyed. Now listen to the rules. No one knows any one's name. Address every one as Sister, and speak when spoken to. Listen well, think hard ; speak straight ; don't let go ; forget yourself. Now go on.

CINDERELLA. I feel very shy and out of place and giddy and dazzled, it is all so bright. What shall I do ?

FAITH. It is of no consequence how you feel. I have just told you what to do. Now forget yourself, don't relapse, it will be intolerably dull if you have to be told everything twice over. Gather your wits together and try to catch hold of the thread of that minuet. Quick now, step in and step out, don't be afraid of compromising yourself.

CINDERELLA. . . . Oh ! how I wish I had stayed at home ! Shame on me ! Now for it.

(*She joins her three sisters, who are discussing in presence of the Prince.*)

CINDERELLA. May I join in your minuet, Sisters ?

ACTION. Yes, Sister, if you can keep the step. The question is how to be always interested and always interesting, and we say——

EMOTION. That the interest of life is all in its feelings. Catch the feeling of the situation and you are interested, and let the feeling of the situation catch hold of you, and you are interesting.

KNOWLEDGE. There are situations that have no feeling.

EMOTION. Then they have no interest.

KNOWLEDGE. These are facts, and there are principles underlying them. These are interesting.

ACTION. Not until they are roused into *act*. Where our Sister says feeling, I say *act*. Catch the action as it passes and you are interested, pass it on to another and you are interesting. Life is movement, catching and throwing of opportunities, the ever alert catches and gives the most. To be always catching acts is to be always interested, to be always throwing is to be always interesting.

KNOWLEDGE. But this is merely surface work. The interest of life is in the gradual accumulation of knowledge, as in a reservoir, and the subsequent diffusion of it.

EMOTION. The bursting of a reservoir of knowledge is one of the greatest catastrophes I know ; a deluge of facts, a landslide of principles, and ruin in their track ; inhuman elements ; one generous moment of emotion is worth them all to persuade and convince. Facts are cold and hard, they neither give nor receive ; principles give but do not receive ; a generous emotion gives and receives, gives itself, receives *you*. And there is the interest of life.

KNOWLEDGE. But supposing the emotion should be ungenerous and mean ; such things do occur ; say, for instance, a panic.

EMOTION. Panic is not life, it is disease ; a mortal fright. Come strange Sister, we are limited for time, you have not spoken your thought. Throw it in or the minuet will be over.

CINDERELLA. The interest of life is a twofold movement, like our breath, inspiration and expiration. The life well lived is balanced between both. We breathe in and take interest, we utter in words what we have breathed in and give interest. We breathe in power, we breathe out life. We receive inspiration from without, and we give from within self-utterance, and true self-utterance always gives living interest. Some breathe out and utter without inspiration. They give words without worth.

Some breathe in and retain what they have breathed, and they live for themselves alone. The perfect life moves in rhythm.

ACTION. This is the end. (*To KNOWLEDGE*) Who is this strange Sister who has only just come?

KNOWLEDGE. I only know the rule is not to ask; ask her to dance again.

ACTION. Will you dance again?

CINDERELLA. What time is it?

ACTION. Twenty minutes to twelve.

CINDERELLA. If there is time, for I have to go at twelve.

ACTION. Who said so?

CINDERELLA. My godmother.

EMOTION. What a pretty thing it is nowadays to see people so well chaperoned! I am glad you are so obedient.

CINDERELLA. I am only just learning to obey.

KNOWLEDGE. Well, there is no time to discuss it if your terrible godmother is so strict. Here, Sister, take your turn and draw the next dance.

(*CINDERELLA draws.*)

CINDERELLA. It is called the 'last word,' I don't understand.

KNOWLEDGE. The last word is a reel. It means that you must answer twelve questions without hesitation. Choose your partner.

CINDERELLA (*to ACTION*). I choose you, I do not know your name.

ACTION. I am very much flattered at your choice. Well, who has the last word?

CINDERELLA. The one who is in the wrong.

ACTION. Who has the first word?

CINDERELLA. The one who asked for the other.

ACTION. Who has the longest word?

CINDERELLA. The one who has the weakest thought.

ACTION. Who has the strongest word?

CINDERELLA. The one who has the deepest conviction.

ACTION. Who has the brightest word ?

CINDERELLA. The one who thinks the least of self.

ACTION. Who has the deepest word ?

CINDERELLA. The one that thinks the longest

ACTION. Who has the truest word ?

CINDERELLA. The one that loves simplicity.

ACTION. Who has the most persuasive word ?

CINDERELLA. The one that does the deed.

ACTION. Who has the loudest word ?

CINDERELLA. The one that has the least reason.

ACTION. Who has the surest word ?

CINDERELLA. The one that has tried and knows.

ACTION. Who has the fittest word ?

CINDERELLA. The one that best knows how to keep silence.

ACTION. Who has the perfect word ?

CINDERELLA. The one that keeps the rule.

EMOTION. The palm is hers again, she never drew breath before answering.

ACTION. I must secure the next victory or she has them all, that would be a bitter pill to swallow. (*To CINDERELLA*) One more, Sister, there is still time, five minutes for one more minuet. I will draw it. (*Draws.*) 'How to be fruitful in thought.'

KNOWLEDGE. 'How to be fruitful in thought,' that is rather obscure. Does it mean to be fruitful in the production of many thoughts, or to think thoughts fruitfully, be they few or many, or to be a person who communicates thoughtfulness, which is more truly fruitfulness.

ACTION. How to be fruitful in thought means 'How shall the thought that is thought be fruitful in act.' There are sterile thoughts and fruitful thoughts. It is a widespread evil to think sterile thoughts. To think of a grievance is a sterile thought, to devise a remedy is a fruitful one. To lament one's slowness, incapacity, wasted opportunities, etc., is a sterile thought; to take an efficacious grip of the present is a fruitful one. Devise an

examen to ensure that act shall follow thought and leave no loose ends, this is the way to be fruitful in thought.

EMOTION. To be fruitful in thought is to think living thoughts. If thought gives vivid impersonation to principles, it becomes fruitful. Principles are dead skeletons, clothe them in living, feeling garments, and they become fruitful in act.

ACTION. Mixed metaphors, my dear, and thus misleading. As I said just now, the palm is to me. The fruit of emotion, the fruit of knowledge, the fruit of thought is act. Action rules the world. Speak, unknown Sister, or yield the palm to me.

CINDERELLA. The highest point of life is thought, the deepest root of life is likewise thought, the eternal life is thought, but in this mortal life we must strive through act to fit ourselves for highest thought, and the fruitful in thought are the ascetic in life, the servants girded in spirit, who watch for their Lord who passes hidden and unseen. To be fruitful in thought is to find everywhere the fruit of the tree of life. What gives thought but love? What gives love but thought? . . . listen! listen! the first stroke of twelve! I must be gone!

ACTION. Not yet, not yet! Wait for the award of the crown, it will be given now for all is over. Five minutes more and it will be yours.

CINDERELLA. Not five seconds. *(Exit.)*

EMOTION. I wish a blight upon her for her dancing. See, she has dropped her slipper, and the Prince has picked it up. What next!

SCENE IV

THE CLAIMING OF THE SLIPPER

(The three Sisters together, CINDERELLA on the floor.)

ACTION. It is the most extraordinary case of failure that I know. We had everything our way until the last

half-hour. We had had the expense and work and trouble of preparation, and really all our fortunes staked on that one throw, and it seemed as if we *must* succeed, and then in comes that childish-looking creature, a mere baby tied to the apron strings of a ferocious godmother, ordered about apparently like a child of six years old, not knowing a rule, never having danced before, and lo! and behold she carries everything before her, answers everything as cool as a cucumber, completely turns the Prince's head, goes off on the stroke of twelve because her dear godmother told her to do so, does not wait for the award of the crown, nor even to pick up her slipper, and then the Prince goes and countermands the award, breaks all precedents, setting us all by the ears, and they say he did not know himself who the lady was, and all the highest officials are making search for her, and that no award will be made until she is found, so it is pretty obvious where it goes to. They are all in a state, and they say the Prince is rather displeased at their being so long about it because his officials have so little 'intuition of merit' that they cannot find the lady.

KNOWLEDGE. What was it the Prince said as he picked up the slipper, I could not quite catch it?

ACTION. As far as I could make it out, it was 'this kind of obedience we see sometimes confirmed by miracles,' I didn't quite see the point, it was rather like the story of *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, and I suppose we shall have an *Order of the slipper* to supersede the Garter. There, Cinderella, you see what a nice mess has come out of the 'Sphere' of last night. It is well for you that you were not there. I thought of you for a moment and smiled to think what a guy you would have looked.

CINDERELLA. Did you? It was nice of you to think of me at all. But tell me, how will they find the lady?

KNOWLEDGE. By the slipper, my dear; the Prince

maintains that nobody else can wear it for it is so small.

EMOTION. Do you know, I noticed her slippers when she was dancing, cardinal red slippers, and embroidered across the front in gold, the one she dropped had the word 'Temperance' across it. Her whole get-up was rather peculiar. I wonder if I could get that slipper on?

KNOWLEDGE. No, 'Temperance' would be a tight fit for you; 'free play' is a dancing shoe that would suit you much better.

EMOTION. Well, certainly you will not get it on, to judge by the broad flat way you put your foot in it last night. I wonder whether Action could get it on?

ACTION. It is a most unfortunate day to take me for such a trial. I over-exhausted myself last night, and this morning my foot is swelled, and there is such a flat feeling about the *sole* as if I could do no more.

EMOTION. Reaction, my dear, *reaction*. I have always heard Knowledge say that Action and reaction were equal and opposite, the higher you pirouetted last night, the completer your morning collapse. (*The bell rings.*) Oh! the bell! The Prince! The ambassador! The slipper! The crown! Here, help! Cinderella! Help us to pull ourselves together; we do look such frights after a night out!

(*Enter a Chamberlain.*)

CHAMBERLAIN (*to ACTION*). This early intrusion, madam, needs no apology, since it is in the Prince's name and urgent. To put the matter in short, we are on an expedition of search, fruitless so far, for the wearer at the 'Sphere' last night of this little slipper. All the gates were guarded last night by the Prince's orders, so it is known for certain that no coach left bearing an occupant without a slipper; the lady must, therefore, be in town, and as we must be near the end of our quest, I

sincerely hope that here among four we may find the owner.

ACTION. Among *three* only, that little girl was not at the 'Sphere' at all.

CHAMBERLAIN. Here is the slipper, you see it is embroidered with the word 'Temperance,' do you recognise it?

ACTION. Perfectly. It was worn by that strange guest who arrived so late and left so early.

CHAMBERLAIN. The Prince is so convinced of this that he promises the wreath of victory to any lady who can wear it.

ACTION. Oh! as to *wearing* it, let me try. A moment of excruciating tightness is well worth it. (*Tries.*) No use, a humiliating failure. Try, Knowledge, if you can't get it on, you are the most temperate of us three and at least it would remain in the family.

KNOWLEDGE (*tries*). I am very sorry, I really can't. I have *spread* so lately as to my shoes. You try yourself, Emotion, you are always going from one extreme to the other. Try to make yourself small for once!

EMOTION (*tries*). It hurts, oh it *hurts* even to try, you can't think how I am suffering even in this attempt. No, I renounce anything you like, for temperance is an impossible price to pay for it. We regret, my lord Chamberlain, that we cannot throw any light on the owner of the slipper.

CHAMBERLAIN. Let your youngest sister try.

EMOTION. Oh, this would be too grotesque for words! It is really almost an impertinence for her to try it at all in your presence.

(CINDERELLA *puts it on.*)

CHAMBERLAIN. Found at last! a thousand thanks, my dear young lady, for your promptitude. I can now relieve the tension of the court. Here is the wreath of Wisdom which I am instructed to present to you in the Prince's

name, and in his name also to announce to you your elevation to a unique position in the peerage of the virtues. The Prince creates a new Peerage with the title of Simplicity, giving you precedence over all but Princes of the Blood and Royal Dukes. Permission to quarter the arms of lively Faith, Contempt of the World, Humility and Modesty, with a sunburst *or* for truth, and a lily *argent* for purity, and a motto of the Prince's own device,

‘ UN SEUL REGARD.’

THE NEW SINTRAM

A Morality Play, in which it appears how the Soul, helped by Common Sense, Grace, and Humility, is fitted to accomplish the Will of God.

CHARACTERS

SINTRAM, the Soul.

FULK OF MONTFAUCON, the Grace of God.

ROLF, Christian Common Sense.

CHAPLAIN, Humility.

GERMAN MERCHANTS, Knowledge and Experience.

ENGELHART OF MONTFAUCON, a Child.

VERENA, Wisdom.

GABRIELLE, Spiritual Joy.

Characters that do not appear:

THE LITTLE MASTER, the Evil One.

BIORN OF THE FIERY EYES, the predominant Passion.

SCENE I

THE CASTLE OF DRONTHEIM

(SINTRAM, *as a boy*, and ROLF.)

ROLF. What is the matter, my lord Sintram?

SINTRAM. The matter! I am a puzzle to myself, a trouble to myself, a burden to myself, a riddle to others, a trouble to others, a burden to others, a *terror* to others. Is that matter enough to make me moody, old Rolf?

ROLF. Matter enough, little lord, but not beyond mending. No riddle is too hard to read, and no burden

too heavy to lift, if a man goes about it the right way ; and as to troubles and terrors——

SINTRAM. Well, yes, what about troubles and terrors ? —you know, old Rolf, all the dreadful dreams that trouble me, every year, in winter,—what about those ?

ROLF. I believe, my lord, that these will have an end, though we shall spend many a year before we have the victory.

SINTRAM. *We!* no affair of yours, Rolf ! Keep your place as my henchman, and don't talk of *we*.

ROLF. Pardon, my lord.

SINTRAM. Well, don't forget yourself again.—What were you going to say ?

ROLF. My lord——

SINTRAM. Rolf, I don't care what you were going to say, but I want you to tell me something. Do you know how I come to have these bad dreams every Christmas ?

ROLF. Yes, my lord Sintram.

SINTRAM. Well then, tell me, and be quick about it, —I am too restless to listen long.

ROLF. It was at Christmas time, when you were seven years old, your father, my lord Biorn of the Fiery Eyes—he was not so called then, that name came to him later—well, he was feasting with his knights, and, to make a long story short, he swore a terrible oath of jealousy and revenge upon the head of the Golden Boar, against some noble merchants of whose influence he was envious, and, as the Evil One would have it, two of these, father and son, sought hospitality that very night, and, in spite of the prayers of your mother, the noble lady Verena, he fell upon them in the courtyard, and, but for heavenly intervention, he would have slain them, against all the laws of hospitality.

SINTRAM. And what had that to do with my dreams ? And with my mother's going away ?

ROLF. The lady Verena fled to the convent to make

atonement, because she could not countenance such deeds, and you, my lord Sintram——

SINTRAM. Rolf, you have not told me all, I will not have any concealment. (*Enter the chaplain of Drontheim.*)—Reverend sir, will you help out my slow old servant with his story. I want to know what evil spell is on me in the winter time and gives me such bad dreams.

CHAPLAIN. Well, my lord, if you want things called by their plain names——

SINTRAM. Yes I do.

CHAPLAIN. Well, then—Pride and Passion invaded the house on the night of your father's crime, and they took their places by your bedside, and troubled your dreams, and that is why, my lord Sintram, you neither have control, nor reason, nor patience, nor even the courtesy that becomes a knight's son, when these dark moods are on you.

SINTRAM. Your words are very free and plain, reverend sir ; if it were not for your sacred character, I would not stand them.

ROLF. I thought, my lord, you wanted facts. I was in the middle of my story. Now, with the reverend chaplain's help, we may devise the cure.

SINTRAM. I won't have the reverend chaplain's help !—my father's son is not to be led in leading strings and lectured like a clerk.

CHAPLAIN. I am not going to dictate to you, my son. I want you to help yourself.

SINTRAM. Well, that is a knightly way of doing things, reverend sir,—but a bad dream cannot be challenged to fight the matter out with the sword.

CHAPLAIN. What about the sword of the spirit ?

SINTRAM. I told you not to lecture me, sir chaplain.

CHAPLAIN. Then you will not draw that sword.

SINTRAM. I never said so.

ROLF. My dear young master, you spoke the truth

when you said you were a trouble to yourself and a burden to others.—Why must you contradict every word the reverend chaplain says to you ?

SINTRAM. Because, as I told you, Rolf, I will not be dictated to. You expect me to stand as demure as a damsel, and be bidden to do this or that at the will of another !

ROLF. I don't, my lord ; I want to make a knight of you,—but a knight must be gentle as he is brave.

SINTRAM. You will wait a long time before you see me gentle, Rolf. I love to be stark and hard as my father is, to make myself feared, and to do my pleasure.

ROLF. Your father, Biorn of the Fiery Eyes, my lord, had never the training of a Christian knight ; God will be merciful to him, but *you* know better.

CHAPLAIN. There are two selves in you, my lord Sintram, and you must choose which shall rule your life ; you have gusts of rage and furious storms in your soul, like my lord Biorn, and then you are weak as water—lashed to tempest by the blowing of the air, a slave to the wild wind, impetuous as a breaker, changeable as the wind, senseless as the storm.

SINTRAM. Very free of speech, sir chaplain ! Choose your words a little more cautiously.

CHAPLAIN. That is the end of the chapter, sir, if you can bear it thus far !—On the other side, you are like your mother, the holy Verena ; when you are quiet and gracious and gentle, I can see her eyes in yours, and your voice, too, is steady and sweet when it is not hoarse with anger. My dear lord, your strength is all on that side ; believe me, the other is weakness.

SINTRAM (*taking the CHAPLAIN's hand*). Sir chaplain, when you speak to me of my mother you can do anything with me,—tell me, then, how does a Christian knight bear himself ?

CHAPLAIN. The Christian knight is gentle and courteous when duty does not force him to be stern.

SINTRAM. That I could never be ! I love to be wild—wild as the wind in the forest.

CHAPLAIN. Well, my lord, if that is your choice, the two evil counsellors, terrors of your dreams, will grow to be your familiars. No man can serve two masters, and you *must* serve one.

SINTRAM. I tell you, sir, I will *not* serve, nor yet obey.

CHAPLAIN. Then you must be the slave of Pride and Passion—there is no other choice. You will grow from a peevish boy to a passionate man. You are not free at this very moment ; I doubt if you *can* help yourself.

ROLF. Hear the chaplain, dear young master,—for your mother's sake.

SINTRAM. Be patient with me a moment, reverend sir. I will control myself and listen—but don't make a woman of me !

CHAPLAIN. No, a knight.

SINTRAM. What shall I do, then ?

CHAPLAIN. Render homage to God, and service to others, keep yourself collected, be not so wild ; be gentle and serviceable, and beware of evil counsel within your own heart. Beware of ' no,' and all that goes behind it. Beware of ' I wish ' and ' I want,' and learn to say *yes* and *I will*.

SINTRAM. I give you my hand on it, reverend sir. I *will* help myself.

SCENE II

THE FOREST

(SINTRAM, *alone*.)

SINTRAM. Two falls, two outbreaks, since my promise to the chaplain ! Two unworthy deeds ! Good old Rolf is ashamed of me, I am disgusted with myself, and the chaplain has, very naturally, withdrawn into his clerical

shell, finding that he could not make a woman of me, or rather—as old Rolf would say—that they could not make a knight of me between them.—I know who rules in me to-night ! it is Biorn of the Fiery Eyes, not the noble and gentle Verena. Well, one must have an outbreak sometimes. Rolf and the Father chaplain had better not come near me to-night !—What 's that noise ? . . . Rolf !

ROLF. My lord.

SINTRAM. What are you doing here, Rolf ? I left orders that no one should follow me !

ROLF. I never heard them, my lord. It is my duty to follow you.

SINTRAM. There are times when I can't bear the sight of you, Rolf.

ROLF. I can walk behind you, master.

SINTRAM. You are so deadly matter-of-fact, Rolf. Why can't you fly into a rage ? You are as meek as the chaplain !

ROLF. My lord, if the gentry wish to fly into a fury, it is their own affair,—I must keep my place.

SINTRAM. And drive others into a rage instead ! Well, listen, Rolf, I will put up with you, in fact, I rather think *you* will have to put up with *me*. . . . I let myself go twice, Rolf, and I am as sore and ashamed as can be, and that is why I am so wild to-night.—Do you know what I did ?

ROLF. I heard something of it, sir.

SINTRAM. Then you probably heard a pack of lies ? Did the chaplain tell you ?

ROLF. No, sir, my lord Biorn told me.

SINTRAM. What did he tell you ?

ROLF. He told me that a ship from afar sailed in, and landed a ship-load of knights, under the lord Fulk of Montfaucon, from Provence, and that he and you fell upon them, though they made no attack, and that you would have slain the lord of Montfaucon—which was a cowardly thing to do when he made no attack on you—

but that the lord Fulk felled you to the ground, and could have made an end of you, but that he was great-hearted and forgave you.

SINTRAM. Well, really, Rolf, you have a very plain-spoken way of saying things ! What more ?

ROLF. Then I heard that peace was made. But you and my lord Biorn of the Fiery Eyes kept hatred in your hearts, and jealousy of the knight of Montfaucon and the stainless blue and gold of his armour, and of his noble lady Gabrielle, and that you wanted to keep the lady prisoner, and murder the knight.

SINTRAM. Rolf, how dare you ?

ROLF. Well, my lord, what else shall I call it ?

SINTRAM. Don't call it anything if you value your life ! I will shoot you if you say much more.

ROLF. As you please, my lord.

SINTRAM. Well, go on, Rolf.—You don't know any more ?

ROLF. Yes, I know, sir.

SINTRAM. Tell me the worst you know.

ROLF. Do you mean to shoot me for it, my lord ?—after all, it's your affair, not mine.

SINTRAM. I told you to say the worst.

ROLF. I know, for my lord Biorn told me when he got cool, that the lord of Montfaucon went bear-hunting with you, and followed the trail, on our Norse snow-shoes, so swiftly that all the Norsemen applauded him,—and that the time came when you should serve him, as an esquire is bound to do, by binding fast his snow-shoe before he made a dangerous descent after his trophies, the bear's head and claws. . . .

SINTRAM (*turning away*). Go on, Rolf.

ROLF. And the Wicked One, the evil Little Master, whispered in your ear : ' Let him go, as he is,' and you gave way, and cried, ' It is quite safe ! ' and the lord of Montfaucon slipped, as the shoe gave way, and fell over the crags,—and you listened to the Wicked One again,

and said : ' He is dead ! It does not matter,'—and you wickedly sped away home, towards the castle.

SINTRAM. Rolf, in pity !

ROLF. If you are going to shoot me, I may as well tell you the whole truth first.

SINTRAM. I don't know what possessed me !

ROLF. Nor I.—You were going home, to feast with the evil counsellors, the World and the Flesh and the Third whom we do not name, and then——

SINTRAM. Well, I don't know either what stopped me !

ROLF. You may wonder ! I say it was the prayers of the lady Verena. But that stupid Little Master overreached himself for once—he muttered a saint's name, by accident, and, at that, you came to yourself, and went to the help of the lord of Montfaucon, and brought him home, wounded but alive.

SINTRAM. What is the use of that now ? I did the unknighly deed—it is just as true a murder as ever could be of a noble knight. . . . Rolf, go away. I may as well finish a bad business.—Go ! I have an appointment with the Little Master.

ROLF. That is no reason why I should forsake you.

SINTRAM. Yes, it is,—you are such a heavy clod of Christian clay, that charms and spells won't work in your presence. So, just go away, or you may see more than you want to see.

ROLF. I don't care what I see ; I will do my duty.—What is on foot ?

SINTRAM. Only this—I have promised a lock of my hair to the Little Master, and he is coming for it.

ROLF. I always heard that he wants a hair of your head to hold you by, and his particular fancy is a lock cut off in the dark, by night, and, with that, he manages to rouse up such a tempest that it lasts all the winter.

SINTRAM. Precisely so, and that leaves the lord and lady of Montfaucon stormbound among the Norselanders at our mercy.

ROLF. And you at *his* mercy !—a very good bargain indeed for the Little Master !

SINTRAM. Don't give your opinion unasked.—Go, and say your prayers with the reverend chaplain,—anyhow *go away*—and . . . perhaps you had better not say your prayers, Rolf ; it might upset things.

ROLF. You cannot command me to do anything contrary to my duty of service, my lord Sintram. I am not going away.

SINTRAM. Then I am ! (*Rushes out.*)

ROLF. He is a very noble lord when in his senses, but to-night he is near to a maniac. It is plain I cannot hold him when he is in this mood. I will get the help of the Father chaplain and the lady Verena.

SCENE III

THE CASTLE OF DRONTHEIM

(FULK, GABRIELLE, *the* CHAPLAIN. *Enter* ROLF.)

FULK. What has happened to that unhappy boy ?

ROLF. He has fled into the forest, my lord, and I fear an evil encounter is before him. He said he had an appointment with the Little Master, and had promised a lock of his hair.

FULK. And he dismissed you ?

ROLF. He did so, repeatedly. I would not have gone from him, but he went from me—he is more nimble than I, and can always get away if he wants to—so I thought the best thing I could do was to go for help. I went to the convent, and obtained the prayers of his mother, and when she prays for him he always comes to himself.—I expect he will be here before long.

CHAPLAIN. And then we shall see an outbreak ! May the saints have pity on him !

ROLF. I think you, my lord Fulk, will do more for

him than I can do. I will keep in the background, and wait till I am wanted.

FULK. Do so, Rolf, and you, my lady, will be pitiful and gracious to him when he comes in, for he will be in a gloomy reaction of despair.

GABRIELLE. That will I, my lord.

FULK. Listen !—here he comes.

(*Enter SINTRAM noisily, gloomy and distracted, looking at no one.*)

FULK. Sintram, the lady Gabrielle is present,—a little more respect, please !

SINTRAM (*making an attempt to salute, and muttering between his teeth*). Much ado about nothing ! Of what use is respect when all is lost ? You might as well ask a man to mend his manners on the gallows !

FULK. And so I should do, if Providence allowed him to be placed in such sore straits.—But you are not so far gone as that, Sintram !

SINTRAM. As far, or further—gone beyond recovery, beyond redemption ! (*Sinks on the floor.*)

FULK. Don't be childish, sir ! Gather yourself together, and make some effort to command your mind.

SINTRAM. Very fine talking !

FULK. To be followed by fine doing. Stand up now, like a man, and tell us what the matter is.

GABRIELLE. And ever *hope*, my lord. However bad the matter may be, your sweet and gracious mother can reach you by her prayers.

SINTRAM. Why did she forsake me ?

GABRIELLE. You will see her again, when you have made yourself fit for the meeting.

SINTRAM. Never again ! I have gone too far ; I gave my lock of hair to the wicked Little Master, and he holds me by that, and says : ' Give up, give up,—despair, despair ! You shall never see the lady Verena again.'

GABRIELLE. Turn your face to the sun, my lord ; see how it streams in through the east window.

SINTRAM. But not for *me*.

GABRIELLE. Your back is turned to it—that is why you cannot see the light.

(SINTRAM *stands up, and looks gloomily out.*)

GABRIELLE. Now you can see it !

SINTRAM. I cannot,—I have gone so far that all is dead.—I see and hope for nothing.—You must despise me,—I am detestable to you all, and, in return, I cannot bear you. Hour by hour, I am growing worse,—nothing shall now make me give in !

GABRIELLE. As long as there is life there is hope. Do not look at those long shadows, my lord. Do not hold your head so rigidly,—look towards the sun.

SINTRAM. I have said that nothing shall make me believe or hope again.

FULK. Why make yourself an outlaw, when no one is against you ?

SINTRAM. Every one is against me—or ought to be—and I will not claim their mercy.

GABRIELLE. Evil counsel, my lord,—you have met with Pride !

SINTRAM. What if I have, madam ? There might be a worse counsellor,—he is my father's friend.

FULK. False friend and faithless ally—so bold at starting, so cowardly in a reverse ! See how he lets you down now !

SINTRAM. He holds me up,—I should have died of shame, without him !

FULK. His support has given way, just when you most needed strength. See, my lord, you have not now the heart of a chicken !

SINTRAM. I shall go back to the forest ; I will not be tormented and hounded into submission !

(*He makes for the door.*)

GABRIELLE. Listen a moment, my lord Sintram. Do you hear that bell?

SINTRAM. What is that?

CHAPLAIN. The Angelus bell in the convent chapel, where your mother is praying for you. . . . Bend your knee, my son—*Et Verbum caro factum est.*

(*SINTRAM and all kneel, in silence, during the ringing of the Angelus bell.*)

SINTRAM (*rising*). I have done wrong, Father chaplain. I have done grievously wrong, my lord of Montfaucon, and I have offended against all courtesy in presence of your lady.—Rolf, I have been a savage bear with you!—Forgive me, all of you.—But I may not stay here, I must be gone.

ROLF. Whither, my lord?

SINTRAM. To do penance, Rolf, at the castle of Steinberg on the rocks of the moon.

(*FULK stops him as he goes out.*)

FULK. Gently, Sintram! No man who goes to do penance wildly, as you are going now, ever perseveres in it.

SINTRAM. I cannot be held back—I *must* go.—It is now or never for the saving of my soul.

GABRIELLE. Listen, my lord Sintram, to the lord of Montfaucon. He tells you the truth, that, if you mean to lead a life of penance, you must have joy in your heart, and a knight's gentleness and courtesy, even with yourself.

SINTRAM. I will live a strict, austere life; I will never see the sunlight again; I will work in chains to expiate my sins.

FULK. That is very well in the full flood of your self-reproach, and worn out, as you are, with fighting against others as well as against yourself, but it cannot last. I

think you may trust me, Sintram, that I shall give you no advice unworthy of a penitent or unworthy of a knight.

ROLF. Hear him, my lord ; no one carries a nobler banner or a more stainless shield than the lord of Mont-faucon.

SINTRAM. Sir knight, be pleased to tell me how I shall do my penance.

FULK. Give yourself to all severe and humble exercises in a spirit of joy and gratitude, as one forgiven. When that fails and you labour heavily in penance, turn to prayer,—watch and hope in prayer. Hard is a penitent's life, but very sweet if penance be joined with hope and love. But beware of extremes, beware of inhuman efforts, of violent measures, of all that drives you off your balance.

SINTRAM. Nothing could be too strong a measure against myself to repair the past.—Weigh time against eternity. *Nothing* can be too much !

FULK. Your thoughts are more generous than they are wise, and, in answering you, I am treading on ground that belongs by right to the reverend chaplain. Nevertheless, since a youth will often listen more to a knight than to a priest, I will venture myself, and tell you again : keep yourself mild, gracious, and gentle in your exercises, and you will be a true penitent, and, later on, a true knight. You will take with you the reverend chaplain and your devoted Rolf to be your companions in the retreat you have chosen.

SINTRAM. I need penance and solitude, not companionship.—Let me go alone. What should I do with a chaplain and a henchman ?

FULK. The chaplain and Rolf will be the two guardians of your spirit. You are rash, and they are calm ; you are violent, and they are gentle ; you will have to fight against despair, and they have true words of hope.

SINTRAM. I cannot understand this weak and

mitigated penance. I must be a man, and fight out my battles alone.

ROLF. My lord, the lord of Montfaucon knows best. He is a true knight,—hear him.

FULK. Hear the experience of years.—Go, in your own headstrong force, to do penance, and in three months you will have broken out again, and you will raid the valleys, and persecute the weak, and be a danger and a terror to all your vassals.—Go in the conditions I lay down, accept the services of Rolf and the ministry of the chaplain, and, day by day, you will grow stronger in your purpose, and your penance will bring light and wisdom to your life.

SINTRAM. I will not contest any further what you say. If the chaplain and Rolf will follow me into my solitude, I will do their bidding.

FULK. The Lord protect thee ! . . . the Lord Himself lead thee, and lift thee up !

(Exit SINTRAM with the CHAPLAIN and ROLF.)

FULK. I think that wild boy has the making of a noble knight, if he will let himself be guided.

GABRIELLE. Will he not go from his self-imposed penance to a monastery, and hide his struggles and his victory there ?

FULK. I do not believe it,—he is made for the forge and the furnace of life ; but he will serve God yet, and that with distinction.

SCENE IV

THE CASTLE OF STEINBERG

(SINTRAM, now a man, pacing up and down, alone.)

SINTRAM. My seven years are ended ! What grave lessons I have learned ! How nearly, often and often,

I have unlearned them all, and broken forth again in lawless liberty and unjust war! To-night the deepest beat in my heart is gratitude. I am thankful that I was spared, thankful that I was guided, thankful, above all, that I was controlled. Now sometimes a sweetness and a sense of strength calmly invades my soul and lifts me up. Humility has grown dear to me, and striving for it makes me breathe deep breaths of solemn happiness. The wild songs have died out of my memory, I care no longer to find the words for them, and, instead of them, I hear great psalm tones rushing through the pine trees, echoing from the rocks in glorious music: 'Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost!' This is the song that the voice of the torrents shouts forth to heaven, and the stars give it back to me on earth. Ah! but this is not the end, this is only preparation, my life is no longer my own, but God's! He, who created me, will lead me forth as it pleases Himself. . . . Rolf!

(Enter ROLF.)

ROLF. My lord!

SINTRAM. I am going to fell wood in the forest. I shall require you.

ROLF. My lord, a message has come from the lord of Montfaucon that your father, lord Biorn of the Fiery Eyes, lies dying; he bids you come and see him depart in peace.

SINTRAM. Saddle my horse, Rolf, I shall attend as commanded.—Have you told me all the message?

ROLF. You must go alone and unattended through the long gorge, and this very night; and in the morning, if you have come through the night's trial victoriously, the lady Verena, your mother, will receive you at the grating of her convent.

SINTRAM. At last! Seven years of penance and the dangers of the coming night will be as nothing if I may see my mother in the morning! She will tell me the

will of God for my life.—Call the Father chaplain ; I will ask his blessing and counsel before I set out.

(ROLF returns with the CHAPLAIN.)

SINTRAM. Reverend sir, I am summoned to attend my father, who is said to be *in extremis*. The order is that I should go alone, and I shall go in all confidence, with your blessing and your advice. I do not know what awaits me to-night, but I know that the long gorge is often the haunt of the evil Little Master. I know that he is too frequently the guest of my father ; therefore, I beg of you to sign me with the sign of the Cross, and to bid me go forth in God's name.

CHAPLAIN. In God's name, go, my son. I can foresee something of the trials that await you to-night ; the flesh will grow faint, and your very heart forsake you, but ever ride on, and remember that you may be over-matched but you cannot be overthrown, if you keep to the straight way and fix your hope on God.

SINTRAM. Can you tell me no more of what is before me ?

CHAPLAIN. No mortal man can tell you more. The passage of the valley is made by each one alone and in silence. But in the morning, if victorious, you shall see your mother. Be of good heart, then ! *In manus tuas, Domine—*

SINTRAM. *Commendo spiritum meum.*

SCENE V

AT THE GRATING OF THE CONVENT

(VERENA behind the grating ; SINTRAM kneeling in front.)

VERENA. Sintram, have you come as a true knight, without a stain upon your shield ?

SINTRAM. No, Mother, I come as a penitent knight—ashamed and humbled, but forgiven.

VERENA. I know it,—all is forgiven, and you have done long penance.—How did you come through the perils of last night's passage?

SINTRAM. With God's help, well;—though strongly set upon, and nearly overcome, the spirit of God helped me to persevere.—I saw my father. He too is penitent, and asks your forgiveness.

VERENA. All is forgiven.—What now do you ask of God as the gift of your life? And what will be the quest of your knighthood?

SINTRAM. I ask, in spite of my unworthiness, to be in the chosen service of the sanctuary.

VERENA. That request will not be granted Sintram.

SINTRAM. I am not worthy.

VERENA. No one was ever worthy, but you are not called.

SINTRAM. Then I have been mistaken in God's will!

VERENA. Can you believe it?

SINTRAM. My lady, I can *always* believe that I have been mistaken, when the word of God comes to me through a lawful channel.

VERENA. Even if it contradicts your highest hopes?

SINTRAM. Why not? Perhaps all the more likely to be so,—I have learned to distrust impetuosity and my own eager thoughts.—What life of service does God offer me?

VERENA. What other life can you think of as acceptable to God.

SINTRAM. That of a pilgrim—and, indeed, I have often dreamt of it, when I felt sure the ministry of the sanctuary was too ambitious a dream.

VERENA. What would you give to God in your life as a pilgrim?

SINTRAM. Poverty, homelessness, and solitude, unceasing prayer, and penance. I would beg my way to

Rome and Jerusalem,—I can see myself entirely free from care and happy as a bird of the air.

VERENA. Just so.

SINTRAM. My lady, I see that you are not pleased.

VERENA. Nor am I ! He who wishes to throw cares to the winds—who withdraws his shoulder from the yoke, and his back from the burden, and his soul from the harassing of responsibility is no true penitent knight of God.

SINTRAM. Direct me yourself, then, Mother.

VERENA. Not so, my son,—think again.

SINTRAM. It might be that God would accept my service as the servant of your monastery, living lowly under obedience, and serving the elect of God. I would give you the service of my strength with all dutiful love,—plough your lands, reap your harvests, build up your walls, and, when you admitted me to do so, pray in the outer courts of your sanctuary.—This lowly life of service would surely be the fittest for a penitent knight.

VERENA. Ah, Sintram ! That is no true humility, you are seeking to avoid the warfare of the Cross !

SINTRAM. You cannot wish me to continue to live as a knight,—you who know my wild nature and the strong raging of my soul ! To what would you expose me ?

VERENA. As a true knight, I would expose you to fighting, to vigilance, to endurance, to hard conflicts, to perils of life and death, to unending toils. The monk rests calmly in solitude and silence ; the pilgrim sleeps in peace, without thought of the morrow ; the farm servant is called home by the Angelus bell, and his work is done,—but the knight of God never rests ; he is the servant of the weak and the helpless and the oppressed ; he must be at their bidding ; he may be summoned to their defence at any hour of the day or night ; his toil and quest are never ending,—yet, if he be a true knight, he must seek time, by day or night, to wait upon God in prayer and silent communion of heart.—Go forth, my son,

be a true knight, take your burden on you, think not of rest, you may not stop to dream. Yours must be a vigilant life,—you may sleep lightly in your armour, but you must not sink to rest,—you may sorrow for your sins, but you must not be unmanned by weeping over them,—you may sing low to yourself the songs of the militant knights of God, the prophets and saints, but you must not laugh or carol loudly, nor dissipate your strength in idle talk,—you may be docile as a child to the commandments of God, but you must be a man in deeds, and responsible for yourself, and—listen, Sintram—while I give you the dearest, gravest charge from God and man,—the lord of Montfaucon gives you his son, Engelhart, to bring up and train in all knightly virtues. There, my son, is your life's work! Take it upon you, and be faithful; God is with you. . . . Listen, I hear the bell at the gate. It is the messengers who have brought the child, Knowledge and Experience, the great and noble merchants whom your father would have slain on the night of your seventh Christmas. Now all is restored, all is well, but all is not finished. Your life is yet before you,—to your dying day you must *labour, fight, and pray*.

(Enter the German merchants with the child,
ENGELHART.)

EXPERIENCE. All best greetings from the lord of Montfaucon, who commends his son to your care.

SINTRAM. I am thankful. . . . *(To ENGELHART)* Come, and, with God's help, I will make a true knight of thee, for the service of God and Holy Church.

THE FABLE OF THE UGLY DUCKLING

*Showing how the soul, which is an ugly duckling,
by adversity and experience, and the abhorrence
of worldliness, may attain to true life.*

CHARACTERS

THE UGLY DUCKLING.

THE WILD DUCK.

THE WILD GEESE.

THE BLACK CAT.

THE DORKING HEN.

THE OLD WOMAN.

SCENE I

THE GOSSIP OF THE DUCK-POND

(All out of sight.)

(Chorus of quacks.)

VOICES. Have you seen the ducklings ?

What do you think of the young ducks ?

What 's the promise of the season ?

Who 's going to be the queen of the duck-pond ?

What is the hideous creature that walks about with the last brood ?

Don't talk about him—the mother is in a great state—some ducks say he is a turkey-chick and it is dreadful mystery and scandal.

ONE GRAVE VOICE. Put him to the test—bring the creature to the pond—if he is a turkey-chick, he will run away—if he is a duck, he will swim ; that is infallible, you can't teach him—if he doesn't take to the water, you can't save him from himself—he must live on land.

A THIN VOICE. Is it bad to live on land ?

THE GRAVE VOICE. Not bad for those who are born to it—only *less*. . . . Hush! Don't hurt anybody's feelings—the ducks are coming—and *it* is behind them whatever it may be.

AN ANXIOUS VOICE. Now, ducklings, ducklings, pay attention—I am taking you to the water—do you hear? (*Chorus of 'cheep, cheep.'*) You must be careful to observe all the laws of respectability—keep together, duck your heads to your seniors, keep your eyes on me—take little billfuls of water, and return thanks at once—there are lots of good things in it—never mind the cold—it's a sign of coward blood to shiver—keep a brave face on whatever happens—now! One—two—three—*swim!*—Follow, monster, if you dare. (*A splash.*)

VOICES ON THE BANK. Look, look, look at the monster, he really swims—it must be a true-bred duck—but did you ever!—Oh! dear, dear, dear, dear, dear, dear, dear, dear,—just listen to the guinea-fowl laughing at him—how ugly he is——

How awkward!

How ungainly!

How unlike his dear mother!

What a large head!

What a long neck!

What a wretched attempt he makes at ducking his head!

THE GRAVE VOICE. But how splendidly he swims!

SCENE II

THE FENS.—IDEALS

(*By night, after some rustling and plunging the Ugly Duckling comes in and sinks down.*)

UGLY DUCKLING. It is all over, my life is a failure! I have come out into the marsh to die alone.

(*Enter another figure, a Wild Duck.*)

WILD DUCK. Who are you and what are you doing here ?

UGLY DUCKLING. I am a duck and I am dying—alone !

WILD DUCK. You are not a duck, you are not dying, you are not alone !

UGLY DUCKLING. Well, I *thought* I was.

WILD DUCK. You must have been very carelessly brought up not to know better, don't they teach you to speak the truth ?

UGLY DUCKLING. How could I know ? I have not been brought up at all.

WILD DUCK. You might have known you were not a duck if you looked at yourself and at me ! You might have known you were not dying when you came squattering through the reeds with so much noise ! You might have known that you were not alone, when I stood before you. It is a fussy, silly thing to take life's troubles so badly as that. I suppose you have met with some trouble !

UGLY DUCKLING. Awful trouble ! My mother is ashamed of me, my brothers and sisters bit me, the guinea-fowl laughed at me.

WILD DUCK. Well, who cares if the old maids titter, aren't you born for the water ?

UGLY DUCKLING. The water is my only joy—I assure you I am a fright on land.

WILD DUCK. I do not doubt it—as a matter of fact every one is a fright who is in a fright—either on land or water, but on the water it is essential not to get scared—how old are you ?

UGLY DUCKLING. Two days.

WILD DUCK. And tired of life already ? Well, there can't be much in you.

UGLY DUCKLING. I am not tired of it—but I don't know how to manage it at all ! And I am so ugly——

WILD DUCK. That is true, you are frightfully ugly——

but I don't know how you may turn out—ugliness isn't an *absolute* obstacle to being of some use.—But I will give you a bit of advice :—Believe in your own destiny—for a duck to be upset . . .

UGLY DUCKLING. You said I was not a duck.

WILD DUCK. True—for a web-footed bird—that is to say a creature which can transport itself by water and land and air, to take its troubles so to heart that the tittering of a guinea-fowl . . .

UGLY DUCKLING. There were other things, the turkey-cock gobbled at me till he grew red in the face—the old ducks shook their heads at me, my brothers and sisters bit me—my own mother said she wished the cat would get hold of me.

WILD DUCK. Well, I suppose all that trouble was a good deal for a thing of two days old.—But still, I can give you seven true things to think about : Nothing is made for nothing.—Every one has a destiny.—Follow on, and things will explain themselves.—Trouble gives experience.—Things are at their worst before they right themselves.—It is stupid to despair of anything.—You will live to see. . . .

UGLY DUCKLING. What ?

WILD DUCK. *To see*, that is more than seeing *something*. It does not matter what you see so long as you *see*.

UGLY DUCKLING. I don't understand.

WILD DUCK. I haven't time to explain, just wait—

UGLY DUCKLING. Here ?

WILD DUCK. Anywhere—what a number of useless questions you ask.

UGLY DUCKLING. One must be somewhere.

WILD DUCK. That comes of living in a farm-yard—you think you must have what you are accustomed to—food in a trough *here* ! And water *there* and a pen in the corner, and a goose-girl and a henwife and a duck-woman to run after you with barley, and cluck at you—and you

pride yourselves on having all that, and think that you cannot do without it.

UGLY DUCKLING. Yes, I always thought so.

WILD DUCK. Always ! How old are you ?

UGLY DUCKLING. Two days.

WILD DUCK. There, don't talk of *always*.

UGLY DUCKLING. How do you live in the marsh ? Who takes care of you ?

WILD DUCK. God, and our own good sense ! God sends the food and we look for it ourselves. When the wind goes to the North we find shelter if we can, if not, we turn our heads to it and endure, till it changes.—If it freezes we work hard together to keep a hole open for drinking. We listen to the wind among the reeds and it tells us many things, but nobody says 'cluck' to us, no one talks about our lovely green heads—but when they glint in the sunlight we think God is pleased to see them,—we think so, He never said it in so many words to us, but we believe it—so we don't pine for the goose-girl and the henwife and the duck-woman to stroke them.—We have very few wants indeed.

UGLY DUCKLING. I think it is a lovely, lovely life indeed.

WILD DUCK. You don't understand a bit about it.—'Lovely' is quite a weak word, a wretched word—a *pond* word—this is quite a different place—wild and grave and free—we want nothing but what we have.—Hark to the sweep of the gale ! I am off. I hope you will find it *lovely* or else come to a better mind—but don't forget !
Trust your destiny ! (Exit.)

(Enter two Wild Geese.)

WILD GOOSE. Who are you ? you look rather forlorn ? We were waiting till your talk with that Wild Duck was over before we came down.

UGLY DUCKLING. I was a duck once. . . .

WILD GOOSE. And what are you now ? You are so

frightfully ugly that we took a fancy to you and came to invite you to travel with us—we are wild geese.

UGLY DUCKLING. Where are you going? And what do you live on? Do you belong to the marsh?

WILD GOOSE. No, no, no, we live on ideas, we are going in search of new ones.

UGLY DUCKLING. Have you eaten up all the old ones?

WILD GOOSE. Not eaten them up, but outgrown them—they are only fit for ducks.

UGLY DUCKLING. I thought the Wild Duck had very new ideas.

WILD GOOSE. How old are you?

UGLY DUCKLING. Two days.

WILD GOOSE. Then I suppose all ideas are new to you—you are scarcely a judge yet. *We* think the Wild Duck rather behind the times. Where were you hatched?

UGLY DUCKLING. In the farm-yard.

WILD GOOSE. Then of course your first ideas were farm-yard and barn-door views—comfort and plenty—and safety—and established rights.—Did you ever see anything in the farm-yard that could fly?

UGLY DUCKLING. I have a sort of belief that I could fly myself—I flew over the hedge behind the pond.

WILD GOOSE. Hear! hear! He flew over the hedge behind the pond!—anyhow you have left the trammels of civilisation behind—try to fly with us—we are going further than the pond—further than the marsh—further than the Wild Duck can follow—we are going to the far North to the undiscovered land where all is new.

UGLY DUCKLING. Are you sure that there is any *all* to discover?

WILD GOOSE. Shame upon your farm-yard spirit! We dare the danger—we are going even to the land of darkness at the pole—will you come?

UGLY DUCKLING. Not beyond the sun.

WILD GOOSE. Ugly, ugly, ugly—you are a son of the farm-yard! You have the heart of a chicken—and the head of a barn-door fowl—you had better fly back over the fence and stay at home—you have no destiny!

UGLY DUCKLING. The Wild Duck said I had a destiny.

WILD GOOSE. What do the Wild Duck know? have they seen the pathless wastes that *we* know? Have they seen what lies beyond?

UGLY DUCKLING. Have you?

WILD GOOSE. No one has seen—no one can see—we follow the call of the Wild Goose that sounds inside ourselves.

UGLY DUCKLING. There is no call like that inside me—there is a voice that tells me that you will never get there and that if any of you do you will never get back again.

WILD GOOSE. What is that voice within you? It is but a farm-yard call, the 'cluck' of the duck-woman.

UGLY DUCKLING. I think, I don't know—but *I think* it is the same call the Wild Duck had—some sort of good sense.

WILD GOOSE. Good sense never found the pole, good sense never saw how the world went round—you wait until we find the springs of the world—you shall see it dance.

UGLY DUCKLING. I shall see? Yes, I shall see some day, and something—no matter what—I shall see my destiny!
(*Exeunt Wild Geese.*)

(*Shots are heard.*)

UGLY DUCKLING. Down they go to the murderous guns—the murderous sportsmen—the murderous black retriever—poor Wild Geese—the flight is ended!

SCENE III

THE COTTAGE IN THE WOOD.—PRACTICAL COUNSELS

(*The Ugly Duckling between a sprightly figure, the Black Cat, and a solid one, the Dorking Hen.*)

CAT. This hen and I are great friends—but we are not exclusive—and as the Old Woman who keeps house for us. . . .

UGLY DUCKLING. An *old woman* keeps house for you, did you say?

CAT. Yes, I said an *old woman* keeps house for us.

UGLY DUCKLING. That upsets all my ideas.

HEN. That's what comes of having ideas to upset—I repeat—an *old woman* keeps house for us.

UGLY DUCKLING. It seems all wrong somehow—upside down.

CAT. You have no experience of life—you—whatever you may be—duckling, gosling, turkling,—would you have *us* keep house for the Old Woman?

UGLY DUCKLING. It would seem more the right thing somehow.

HEN. And feed her on mice, and scratchings from the fowl-yard, I suppose?

UGLY DUCKLING. That does not sound right either—I suppose she could not bear that?

CAT. No, it's very comfortable, you see, just as it is. We could not manage to be servants to her, but she gets on pretty well as servant to us—*general* servant, you understand, cook-housekeeper, upper and under housemaid, scullery-maid and everything.

UGLY DUCKLING. But I thought old women kept cats and hens.

CAT. And now you see that cats and hens keep old women—your ideas are patriarchal in their simplicity—we have gone up in the world, old women have gone down, that is all.

UGLY DUCKLING. And the things that were meant to be servants have turned into masters !

HEN. Yes, and the things that ought to be masters have turned into servants. Look here—(*to the cat*)—call the Old Woman.

CAT Mi-a-a-a-o-o-w.

(*Enter the Old Woman in a fuss.*)

OLD WOMAN. What is it, my pretty, pretty ; did it want its little drop of milk ?

CAT (*arrogantly*). Bring up some cream and chicken bones at once !

HEN. Go and get me some green stuff to peck at—and some boiled potatoes.

OLD WOMAN. Henny-penny dear, there isn't any left.

HEN. Go and find some, then.

(*Exit Old Woman.*)

CAT. There ! Didn't I tell you so, she keeps house for us—we do nothing and she waits on us.

UGLY DUCKLING. I call her a most silly old woman. Who would live to take care of a cross scratchy cat and a hen ?

CAT. Do you think she wants us, or we want her most ?

UGLY DUCKLING. I cannot tell, but I am certain it is all wrong somewhere—she is serving you—but why ? Old women were not made for cats.

CAT. Well, as she is not listening and as it won't create a false position, I will let out the truth to you—and of course the truth is that you are quite right and this old lady's household is all wrong—but it is not for us to tell her so—it would be for her to tell us. We are made to be servants and means to an end, and she has mixed up the ends and the means, and has let us be masters, and it is all coming to a very bad end indeed. But so long as she

keeps house for us we don't care—she pays the rent, and gets the food and takes the trouble, and trots about all day, and all for us—nothing comes of it—it is a miserable life for her—but she does not see further than the surface of things—I daresay she would take you on too if you like—there's a box free in the back parlour—I'll tell her to make you up a bed there.

UGLY DUCKLING. I'd rather die than belong to such a house—fancy being an Old Woman's *end*—and living in a tangle of things that are upside down. She is the most stupid Old Woman that *ever was born*—to keep you both—it is all a great fraud.

CAT. She was born a *long* time ago—quite in the beginning of the world—and she will go on to the end of it. There are quantities of old women like her, and young ones too, who spend their lives stroking black cats to see the sparks, and feeding hens—making ends of them and serving them, just for nothing at all. It's all a huge fraud, but very amusing for us to have her for our slave.

UGLY DUCKLING. I shall go and tell the Old Woman about it this very minute.

HEN. My dear! Save yourself the trouble—all the prophets and doctors and teachers since the beginning of the world have told her so and she does not believe them.—The Truth itself cannot teach those who have no mind to be taught.

UGLY DUCKLING. What does the Truth itself say?

CAT. Well, as we are telling the truth behind the Old Woman's back—the truth is that things are not as they look—and as you very truly observed, the world is rather upside down—and the values of things have got wrong.—There are things that show, and these are worth nothing at all—there are things that don't show, and these are worth everything—that is how things have gone wrong in the world. That wretched Old Woman, poor as she is, is simply eaten up with that beggarly idea. She spends all her powers in trying to make the Hen cackle and get

me to arch my back and give off sparks for her—and when we do, what the better is she for it?—So she is always peevish and disappointed, and will be till the end of her life.—Now, if you are not going to accept the empty box you had better go—for we don't want any one here who is out of tune with the establishment.

UGLY DUCKLING. I would rather be pecked to death, or eaten up by the dog, or shot like the Wild Geese. I would rather die of hunger in the marsh or be trampled on by the goose-girl than live with you on chicken bones and cream—anything rather than a fraud—I have had enough of appearances.

CAT. You haven't had much !

UGLY DUCKLING. There isn't much to be had.

SCENE IV

THE FENS.—REVELATION

(The Ugly Duckling alone.)

UGLY DUCKLING. This is not a bad year's education.—I have learnt—let me see all I have learnt.—That the farm-yard was not all the world.—That adversity opens one's eyes. I would not give up now, one titter of the guinea-fowl, or one bite from the ducks, or the snubbing of the duck-woman, or the cold loneliness of the marsh, or even that sickening hour in the worldly Old Woman's hovel. Then I have learnt that the strongest folk I have met were the Wild Duck—so hardy in their poverty and so true in their thoughts.—That reality and truth go before all things.—That in trying to be new for the sake of being new, one may fall stark dead like the Wild Geese.—But truth for truth's sake is real life.—And what else ? That taking means for ends is slavery, and turns truth and right upside down. But what is the substance of it all ? I feel that I am growing strong—I am almost full grown

now—but I do not know what my life is to be—I never yet met a bird made like me—can I be the only ugly thing in the world, the only thing without a meaning? The wise Wild Duck told me to believe in my destiny—so the question may yet find an answer—only one thing I am certain of, that I am made for the water, so to the broad deep water I will go. (*Turns round and sees three Swans.*) Oh! the beautiful birds! I never saw the like of them—how splendidly they swim—if I could be like them—so white, so strong, so royal.—They would kill me if they knew I thought such things; but I will go to them, better to be killed by them than to live among the lower creatures.

(*Exit in the direction of the Swans.*)

A CHILD'S VOICE. Look! look! at the three beautiful Swans! Glorious Swans!

ANOTHER VOICE. They are four! See the fourth one coming through the reeds!

VOICE OF THE UGLY DUCKLING. So the question has an answer after all and I too, the Ugly Duckling, am a true Swan!

SONG OF THE SWAN

Spirit seeking light and beauty,
Heart that longest for thy rest,
Soul that askest understanding,
Only thus can ye be blest.

All the joy and all the fairness
Fade away from earth's delight
By the steadfast contemplation
Of the glory out of sight.

Through the vastness of creation,
Though your restless thought may roam,
God is all that you can long for,
God is all His creature's home.

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Taste and see Him, feel and hear Him,
Hope, and clasp His unseen hand ;
Though the darkness seem to hide Him,
Faith and love can understand.

God, Who lovest all Thy creatures,
All our hearts are known to Thee,
Lead us through the land of shadows
To Thy blest *eternity* !

OBITER DICTA LONG AGO IN ENGLAND

CHARACTERS

SAINT BENNET BISCOP—Abbot of Wearmouth.

SAINT JOHN OF BEVERLEY—A young Monk.

CAEDMON—The cowherd Poet.

SAINT HILDA—Abbess of Whitby.

HERESWITHA—Queen of Northumbria, Sister of St. Hilda.

ALTRUDE }
ANSILDE } Young Nuns, nieces of St. Hilda.

SCENE I

THE ABBEY OF WHITBY. HERESWITHA AND THE
ABBESS HILDA

HERESWITHA. The joy of life is doled out in very unequal shares, sister—I fear you are carrying off both worlds. I could slap your portress for sheer spite and envy at her peaceful face. And those young nuns of yours, it is positively saucy to look on our troubled mortal life out of such smiling eyes.

HILDA. Would you be willing to be as they are? Would you bear the yoke even for one day, and have me as your Abbess?

HERESWITHA. No, by my troth, that I would not. I would live under the Reverend Abbess of Coldingham or Wimborne or even under the rule of the learned nuns of Barking, but not under the austerity of my own Sister's crosier,—nevertheless, you cannot deny that you have the best of both worlds, with all your austerity! Now, look at me!

HILDA. What new troubles have you?

HERESWITHA. It is ever new and ever old. My Lord is at war again, with Penda, for the cause of raids and murders and domination of the Midlands. Now can you guess what are my troubles by day and harassing thoughts by night. I have a handful of churls for my defence, and not a head amongst them.

HILDA. With your head above them, sister, I should say it was better so than otherwise. Would you not be in evil plight with divided counsels, if every churl had his own head ?

HERESWITHA. You are an Abbess of men as well as of women, but my churls know no religious obedience. I am bound to rule them like a herd of wild cattle. I drive them before me in war, and keep them behind me from plunder. No spark of good or grace can be found in a Northumbrian churl.

HILDA. Much good in his heart, and much grace from God, if he be patiently taught to bow his head beneath the yoke of Christ.

HERESWITHA. Sweet Lady Abbess, that must be taught by one who has bowed her head to the same yoke, you can give them of your abundance, grace, and submission and heavenliness of mind. I often see your monks at the plough and say to myself : if these churls can learn to be so gentle with each other and their cattle, the monasteries must be heaven on earth. But we outside ! Consider that amidst all the evils that my wild servants bring upon me, I have each day before me that the hordes of Penda may overrun my Lord's host, I may hear of his defeat and overthrow, perhaps of his death.

HILDA. God fits the back to the burden, He fills the cup for each one of us, for you, the courage of battle, for me, the counsels of peace, maintained by the heavenly warfare of prayer.

HERESWITHA. You know something of both lives,—tell me,—could those outside ever have understanding of yours ?

HILDA. I think, *never*, the sweets of God are so within, that they can only be read from within. You can see two shining lights, austerity and peace, from the one you shrink, the other perhaps you would covet.

HERESWITHA. But not at the price !

HILDA. No, and the peace is so linked with the austerity that it may never go alone.

HERESWITHA. Peace comes of your strong walls that shut out the turbulent world.

HILDA. It comes rather of strong warfare against the flesh and the pride of life. Do you think my nuns would have that look of unearthly peace, if one had a wish to rule, another to rustle in rich attire, and another to take her ease and enjoy the good things of life ?

HERESWITHA. I think you said truly that no one might understand save those that read within. For it seems to me, that you have pared down life till it has become bare existence, washed spotless it may be, but washed of all that gives it melody and colour, yet, Sister Abbess Hilda, I look at your nuns and say, ' they are more truly happy than I. See these two that are coming this way.'

(Enter ALTRUDE and ANSILDE, trying to compose themselves to gravity.)

ALTRUDE. Come this way, Ansilde ! We did not know you were engaged, Mother Abbess.

HERESWITHA. Let them come in, Hilda ; surely there can be no very dread secrets in the disclosures they have to make. Their joy of life is enough to break through all your grim enclosures.

ALTRUDE. We do not want to break through the enclosure. We love it ! It is the joy of our life.

HERESWITHA. Tell your business then to your Mother Abbess.

ALTRUDE. My Lady Abbess, . . . we come from the infirmary . . . we have been visiting dear old Sister Willesinde, and . . . she has seen . . .

ANSILDE. A vision. . . .

ALTRUDE. It was a winding sheet. . .

ANSILDE. And . . . we were in it.

ALTRUDE. Both.

ANSILDE. And we had crowns on our heads !

ALTRUDE. And jewelled sceptres ! . . .

ANSILDE. And we reigned as queens for ever and ever. . . .

ALTRUDE. And she served us as a heavenly lay-sister ! . . .

ANSILDE. That was the only wrong part, we ought to have served her, for she is a saint.

HILDA. When simple souls, and dear to God, see such things, daughters, no wise maiden will laugh without seeking the hidden seed of truth in the vision. How do you understand it ?

ALTRUDE. That we must die, and that only then can we reign in the kingdom of heaven ?

HERESWITHA. The dying does not seem to be too painful in the doing, Altrude, if the grossness of my earthly vision reads aright ! . . . But I must leave your Mother Abbess time to counsel her daughters and bring her sons under the discipline of peace, while I return to the rougher lot that has fallen to me. Remember me, all good souls, in your prayers !
(Exit.)

ANSILDE. Mother Abbess, the Lady Hereswitha knows nothing of our cloister life, she thinks it but a peaceful dream.

HILDA. At which you are nettled ?

ANSILDE. I do not like our life to be belittled and misunderstood.

HILDA. Child, do you not know that this must always be. What says the Gospel ? The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

ANSILDE. Mother Abbess, it nettled me to feel an unworthy thought in my own breast—I thought it partly true. . . .

HILDA. What ?

ANSILDE. What they say so often, that our peace comes from shutting out what is hardest, and withdrawing ourselves therefrom. I know it is not true, Lady Abbess, but I cannot find the answer in my heart. What we have undertaken is not so hard, and life outside seems to be hard indeed. Yet we came in search of what was most hard and severe, the yoke of daily obedience.

HILDA. And you do not find it severe ?

ANSILDE. . . . Yes and no. . . . I know that I am fighting from morning till night, and yet I know that I am at peace when I fight, and as soon as I give up fighting all peace is gone. This is my worst thought, Lady Abbess, that all our warfare lies in such little things, is there not danger that we belittle our minds and souls therein ?

HILDA. Yea, a very great danger.

ALTRUDE. My Lady Abbess !

HILDA. Take no scandal at this, it is better to face the danger. Christian kings and queens and Christian folk outside fight a hard and earnest battle against stern foes, and hard need keeps their arms bright and strength girt up. Christian maidens must look stern things in the face and be warriors, ready to turn their hands to defence, and labour and charity. Maidens in the cloister must not be outdone by them, they must be more stalwart warrior-maidens yet, and fight more hardly, though the foes are unseen.

ANSILDE. This little-souledness is surely the worst foe in the monastery ?

HILDA. So indeed it is.

ALTRUDE. So soft to itself and so easily overthrown.

ANSILDE. So slow in action and fearful of great deeds.

ALTRUDE. So ready to lament, so slack in its success.

ANSILDE. So quickly out of heart in adversity.

ALTRUDE. So easily moved by words of dispraise.

ANSILDE. So dependent on human comfort.

ALTRUDE. So unwilling to bear up under blame.

ANSILDE. So ready to give up the ghost.

ALTRUDE. So unable to rise again from an overthrow.

HILDA. It seems you know something of this by experience.

ALTRUDE. That we do ! I at least !

ANSILDE. And I more ! Yet, Mother Abbess, it would teach us more if you would yourself tell us how we should behave ourselves that we may not be little-souled.

HILDA. Daughters, if you are in earnest, listen to me. Certain great traditions are in the Church, of a consecrated life under the veil, these drew you to the cloister, God's Providence guiding you ; here you have found your souls' home, bear in mind that you are on a seaworthy ship but that you are not in port. You have to spread your sails, tend your helm, ply your oars,—if ever you forget this and sit idle, swiftly will come the punishment of little-souledness.

ANSILDE. God forbid !

HILDA. Ay ! but you forbid likewise. Trade with the gifts God has given, bend your minds to holy learning ; so you may escape the fretting moth of littleness of mind, that would wear out your sails. Brace your wills to action, that they may not be the sport of weak desires—train your heart and lip to song which keeps alive the courage of the soul. Being buffeted by trials, learn to laugh ; being reproved, give thanks ; having failed, determine to succeed. You are warrior-maidens, be you watchful, temperate, indomitable, serene and great-hearted, humble and fervent, intrepid and strong. So would I wish you to be.

ALTRUDE. So has old Sister Willesinde ever been.

HILDA. That simple soul has been all this, and more, for in her humblest works she never stooped to serve any but God,—and therefore, at the point of death, she laughs in the latter day. Go, daughters, to your work and I to mine.

SCENE II

THE VISION OF CAEDMON

HILDA—ALTRUDE—ANSILDE

(*Enter* ST. BENNET BISCOP, ABBOT OF WEARMOUTH,
and JOHN OF BEVERLEY.)

HILDA. Whence come you, Father Abbot, and how goes the monastery, and how fare the disciples?

BENNET. I come straight from the monastery, Lady Abbess, to give you an account thereof and of the disciples. We have had six days of stubborn work, felling trees and ploughing the stiff clay on Wearside, and after Vespers had been sung yesterday it seemed good to me to come and render an account to you of all. And to-morrow the Lord's day, the brethren will rest their bodies and strengthen their souls with prayer and reading.

HILDA. What of the young disciples Bede and John, who has attended upon you, I see?

BENNET. Our Bede is ever the same, attentive to his books and writing. He is learning to write a fair and firm hand,—but even more attentive to prayer and singing and the duties of religion.

HILDA. There is a tranquil grandeur about that child which always makes me feel that he, though a child, is great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

BENNET. It is true, Lady Abbess, Bede is great-souled.

ALTRUDE (*to* ANSILDE). Just what we have reason to fear we are not.

BENNET. All that is not heavenly seems to drop off from him as though it could not cling to his soul. Clear-eyed, he goes to the heart of things, and all truth, all goodness gather round him, as bees around a newly opened flower.

ANSILDE. To *give* sweetness or to *get* it, Father Abbot ?

BENNET. Too sharp a division, Mistress, but, if you press me hard, I stick to it, Bede is a flower, and the bees gather round him in search of honey, and they find in him a sweetness that has no aftertaste, the love of God and man, full blown and roseate.

ANSILDE. Is that what makes him great-souled, Father Abbot ? Altrude and I are in search of greatness of soul.

BENNET. He draws his honey from God,—simple, obedient, diligent in prayer, studious at learning, with a quiet happy gift of taking all things at their best, such is Bede.

ALTRUDE. What is Bede to become, Lady Abbess, for what are you training him ?

HILDA. I train him for God, let God do with him what He wills.

BENNET. Have you no dreams or plans for this favourite son, Lady Abbess ?

HILDA. No dreams for any one, Father Abbot, but that God should dispose of them. If God has work for Bede to do, and I train him for God, then God will find him ready to his hand when the time comes. I think Bede will be a teacher of men, I may be mistaken, but if God is better pleased that he should plough and sow the land, and reap the harvest, provided he keep heavenliness of soul, what is it to his servant !

ALTRUDE. And all his learning ? Bede will be a learned man, Mother Abbess !

HILDA. Then his learning will adorn the spiritual contemplations of his mind. The riches of his thoughts will be sanctified in humble work, and devout obedience will consecrate his gifts to God.

ANSILDE. Would Bede be cast down, if he were taken from his books and put to tending cattle ?

ALTRUDE. I believe not, that is where his greatness of soul would show itself.

HILDA. Just as for you it would show itself in

gladness under reproof and quick dismissal of your own inclination.

ALTRUDE. Day by day ! I am not yet great-souled and the battle is *long* !

HILDA. You are not yet the warrior-maiden that you must become, how would you stand adversity, you to whom daily trials are a burden ?

BENNET. I too, Lady Abbess, deserve such reproofs, for, I will not hide my own littleness of soul before these young Sisters. . . . I, too, have thought what profit is there for a monk in giving fodder to cattle and in draining the morass !

HILDA. Is that all you have to do, Father Abbot ?

BENNET. And teaching '*hic, hæc, hoc*' to little boys.

HILDA. Is that all your duty, Father Abbot ?

BENNET. And keeping peace among the farm churls.

HILDA. Is that the end ?

BENNET. My lady knows that I share the common duties of the monks—the Chapter and Choir duties.

HILDA. And are they not great duties with the Angels ? Ah ! thankless soul, does not the last tone of Matins echo on to Lauds at daybreak in your soul . . . are not the last praises of Lauds joined to the fervent supplications of the hours, and these linked to the calm cadence of Vespers at eventide ? Is not your life a Paradise of praise if you will have it so ? Though thankless tasks and rude earthly matters seem to consume your time and thoughts, sing, Father Abbot, sing wisely all the day long before your Maker !

BENNET. I shall do it to God's honour, Lady Abbess, and yours, who strive ever to lift my weary spirit, for struggle as I may, I am not yet heavenly-minded. But you speak of singing, Lady Abbess, and singing is part of my business to-day. You know the cowherd, Caedmon ?

HILDA. I know him, a good and lowly man, but almost dumb.

BENNET. He waits outside.

HILDA. Is he in any trouble ?

BENNET. At least he is in great perplexity.

HILDA. A good cowherd's perplexities cannot be very obscure. Bring him in, Father Abbot.

(Exit ABBOT, returns with CAEDMON.)

HILDA. What troubles thee, Caedmon ?

CAEDMON. Yesterday night, as often before at the glee singing at supper, the harp went round, and each one sang his song. . . .

HILDA. And what next ?

CAEDMON. Next I saw the harp coming my way . . . as often before. . . .

HILDA. And so ?

CAEDMON. And so, as often before, I grew afraid, and said to myself, I will not stay, I will go to the cattle byres, and I slipped away, as often before. . . .

HILDA. And is that all ?

CAEDMON. That is only the beginning . . . I went down to the cow byres, so heavy and sad in heart as never before . . . and I foddered the cattle and lay down beside them on the straw to sleep. . . .

HILDA. And what fell out ?

CAEDMON. There stood before me One in my sleep, so shining as never before I saw one shine, and He was crowned and smiling.

HILDA. And what said He ?

CAEDMON. He called me by my name and said : 'Sing, Caedmon . . . sing some song for Me.'

HILDA. And what reply did my son Caedmon make ?

CAEDMON. I made answer, 'I cannot sing,' and for this I left the feast and came hither.

HILDA. And what answer made the crowned Person ?

CAEDMON. He made answer, 'However that be, you *shall* sing to Me.'

HILDA. To whom you said ?

CAEDMON. I said only, 'What shall I sing ?' For it

went through me like a sword-thrust of joy, 'for *Him* thou couldst sing.'

HILDA. And what then did He say?

CAEDMON. 'Sing,' said He, 'the beginning of created things.' . . . My Lady Abbess, I know not the beginning of created things.

HILDA (*giving a book to ALTRUDE*). Read aloud to him, Altrude, the beginning of created things.

(ALTRUDE *reads some verses from the first chapter of Genesis.*)

HILDA. Enough, daughter,—Caedmon, God has given thee heavenly grace, go and work with it, and thou shalt be a singer who shall be heard unto the end of time. Return to-morrow and thou shalt sing to us.

(*Exit CAEDMON.*)

ALTRUDE. My Lady Abbess, I think that Caedmon, too, is great-souled. Every one knows that he could not sing, and he has gone without a word or a change on his countenance to do your bidding.

HILDA. God's bidding, daughter Altrude. The grace of heavenly strength is for the day. Be you also great-souled, and work to-day with God's grace. Think not too fearfully of to-morrow, there is a day in each one's life that is, as Caedmon said, 'as never before,'—the '*dies Domini*' of the soul; it may be that this is the dawn of yours.

ANSILDE. Oh, Mother Abbess, do not go away, tell us about the '*dies Domini*.'

JOHN. My Lady Abbess, let me tell the Sisters of the '*dies Domini*,' for I am a young disciple, and you will tell me if I know the lesson without fault.

HILDA. Yes, tell them, and I shall see if you understand it yourself.

JOHN. The sun rises out of the sea daily, and lights upon Yarrow, and Wearmouth and Whitby, and sets at evening behind the moors. But not all see it alike,

and we see it not every day the same ; first we see it as the lamp of day, and we only wonder and rejoice in its heat.

HILDA. And after that, John ?

JOHN. Then it becomes the rule of the Lord's working days, it calls us to labour and to prayer, but it is not the '*dies Domini*.'

HILDA. When dawns the '*dies Domini*' ?

JOHN. At the end of six working days, Lady Abbess. The sunset of the sixth working day, it always seems to me, is not of this earth, it is hushed and gladsome, and all Creation, knowing its Maker, sits at rest and waits for the rising of the next sun.

ALTRUDE. I don't understand, Lady Abbess, is John speaking of the week or of the days of the soul ? And if so, how does he count them ?

BENNET. Ever at your sharp divisions, Mistress ; 'Not in dialectics hath it pleased the Lord to save His people,' as a holy Bishop said.

ALTRUDE. Where then, Father Abbot, doth it please the Lord to save His people ?

BENNET. In the wholeness of a simple heart.

ALTRUDE (to HILDA). Father Abbot always calls me Mistress when he is displeased, as though I were not a Sister, I feel it a reproof.

HILDA. And so it is, to a worldly and carping spirit.

ALTRUDE. Is that mine ?

HILDA. Some unlovely remnant thereof is there. Continue, John, what you have understood concerning the Lord's day of the soul.

JOHN. In the working days the soul is self-bounded, and likewise the mind ; and it has not understood the teaching of Christ, 'unless a man renounce all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple,' for it has not renounced and resigned itself, and, therefore, the little croft of its own mind and soul contains its little all.

HILDA. And when the Lord's day dawns ?

JOHN. Then it gives all for all, the world and heaven and earth become its own ; there dies desire, for possession is attained.

ANSILDE. Not possession, for that is heaven ?

JOHN. Possession by *earnest*, God is even better than His word, not less good. Listen to this :

There are sabbaths in the mind,
Which in deepest quiet bind
Love and passion and the world
With its glowing landscapes furled,
When the song of vernal bird
Like a common sound is heard,
When the sun and wind and shower
And the rainbows have no power,
And the forest and the lake
Can no inward echo wake.

.
Things which once the soul could move

.
Now are dull and nerveless things,

.
In such times of inward sinking
Fancy may perchance be drinking
Waters in some holier spirit,
Out of earth, in heaven, or near it.—(FABER.)

ALTRUDE. That reads not like any verses that I ever heard !

JOHN. That is a verse of the future. But in the Kingdom of Heaven there is no *now* and *then*, for all is *now*. Man's heart and soul are of all time, and God speaks in many ways by His elect.

BENNET. My Lady Abbess, John and I must go, we have a long way to go back. (*Exeunt BENNET and JOHN.*)

ANSILDE. Lady Abbess, John of Beverley is great-souled too.

HILDA. Yes, great-souled in self-renunciation ; he

sees himself as nothing and God as all, and therefore he is always at peace.

SCENE III

THE SINGING OF CAEDMON

(HILDA with her nuns, and the child scholar, BEDE, on the one side. On the other, CAEDMON with a harp, surrounded by monks.)

JOHN. Caedmon is now ready to sing, my Lady Abbess.

HILDA. Sing to us, Caedmon, in God's name, the beginning of created things.

CAEDMON (*sings 'With verdure clad,' from Haydn's 'Creation'*).

HILDA. Caedmon! Caedmon! God has given thee a gift! Sweet is the singing of a heart that is lowly and loving. Be ever thus, forsake not thy lowly work, but in the byres and the furrows, on the river-side and the fells, sing, Caedmon, to God, and others shall sing and praise Him with thee, for the gift that is given to the lowly of heart.

CAEDMON. My Lady Abbess, with your leave, I must away, I must be at the plough before the shadows are short.

HILDA. Go, and may He prosper the work of thy hands, and speed the ploughing. (*Exit CAEDMON.*)

ANSILDE. Lady Abbess, I begin to understand about greatness of soul.

ALTRUDE. And I, about the '*dies Domini*.'

HILDA. Yes, it came to him as song, and his trouble has vanished for ever, because the God of consolation and sweetness and of song has shown him a glimpse of His loveliness and made him hear the oracles that speak behind the lowly works of this world. They will speak to him now all the verities that lie behind all the commonplace sights and sounds of this life.

ALTRUDE. That is . . . parables? Lady Abbess, how long must it be before the '*dies Domini*' dawns for us?

ANSILDE. Why *us*? we have two souls, not one. '*Hodie mihi cras tibi!*' '*Cras, cras, cras,*' said the raven!—'why not to-day?'

ALTRUDE. I think it will never dawn at all on one so saucy as you, Ansilde. I see no hope of your reigning for ever as Queen, as Sister Willesinde saw you; I think you will be a scullion in the Kingdom of Heaven or hardly get there at all!

ANSILDE. I thank you for that good opinion you have found of me. I had just discovered the same truth for myself. Quite outside all joking, Altrude, when you think of Bede, Christ's little scholar, and John of Beverley with his far-off thoughts, and Father Abbot with his lowly assiduity, and the great Bishop Cuthbert of Lindisfarne, preaching the Gospel in the border country, and Bishop Theodore of Tarsus, and then of our own saints, such as Sister Willesinde, and even of our own Aunt Hereswitha, who keeps such a brave heart up in her troubles. What is there left for us with our little thoughts and little ways and little hearts, but to be door-keeper and scullion together in the Kingdom of Heaven?

ALTRUDE. Don't you believe the '*dies Domini*' would make all the difference? But if John counts six working days before the Lord's day, and Saturday the last of them, I don't believe that I can be much further than Wednesday, or even Tuesday in the working week. What do you think?

HILDA. Have you so little understanding, children, of things spiritual, that you count by days and hours in the kingdom of grace. Days are periods; one may live many days in a short time, and be quickly made perfect, and another may hardly live a day in a year.

ALTRUDE. God forbid!

HILDA. Ah! daughter, say not, God forbid, as though God were slack in His promises, or delayed in His work.

There be nuns that dally with their life, and for them, the way is long and weary ; and there be others that go harder ways but sing as they go, carrying lightly the yoke,—and on them the great day dawns and they see all things ‘ as never before.’ And then we say of them, ‘ She is a true nun, she is ready for everything, to be sent hither or thither, to be called up or set down, to live a long life or lay it down in martyrdom.’

ALTRUDE. Why not to-day, Mother Abbess ? Ansilde was right—why should it not be to-day ?

HILDA. Why not to-day ?

ANSILDE. And no change in our outward life ?

HILDA. None, but that which comes from within. See how the Abbot and his monks and Caedmon ply their labours, and they might say : ‘ What are these kine to the Kingdom of Heaven ? ’ yet,—in tending cattle for God’s sake, they reign as kings in His sight, and all the great ones of the earth are as churls beside them. *All is within.*

ALTRUDE. *I see.*

HILDA. Do you see ? Do you see that to love is to live, and to serve is to reign for ever ? And the lowly are highest and the highest are lowliest, that to yield is to command and to be unknown is to be celebrated—and that work that seems of little use comes nearest to the working of miracles ?

ALTRUDE. Yes, yes, I see. I will learn the lesson, Lady Abbess.

ANSILDE. Perhaps, Altrude, some day you and I shall be great-souled, if we keep our thoughts fixed on Heaven, and the songs of Heaven in our hearts !

HILDA. Sing to me now, the strange song of Heaven that Cuthbert heard them singing in the Border Country.

(The nuns sing ‘ The Sands of Time are Sinking.’¹)

¹ ‘ Last Words of Samuel Rutherford.’

WHO KILLED COCK ROBIN ?

(*A Morality Play*)

I

ORAIISON FUNÈBRE, BY THE ROOK

HERALD. Who 'll be the Parson ?

ROOK. I,

HERALD. said the Rook

ROOK. With my little book,
I 'll be the Parson.

Is not the life of man upon earth all a trial ? So reads the older Vulgate text in the Book of Job (vii. 1). The birds of the air have gathered themselves together in a congregation ; the swallows have postponed their flight, the starlings have subdued their chatter, the rooks are silent, the turtle dove is sobbing. We have sustained a grievous loss, Cock Robin is dead !

Dead—did I say ? It is not enough. Cock Robin is *slain* by a treacherous arrow which struck him to the heart.

To die is little to a Cock Robin, little to the birds of the air, ' for die we must, and turn to dust, may God forgive our sins,' Cock Robin saw it with bright eyes on the farmer's tombstone and knew that it must be his own fate. We all know it, the rooks have read it with dry cawing, the starlings have commented it, the turtle-dove has accepted it, the blackbird has sung it in long cadences of assent, the thrush has warbled the answer of the life to come, the swallows have flown in search of it, away

. . . away ; we all know it, yes, to die is little to a Cock Robin. But Cock Robin was slain ! Yet to be slain is not unbearable, to be slain in war is the fate of heroic robins, after one supreme hour of battle, the best of a lifetime—in a catastrophe,—that will not leave regret, for it was worthy—Oh ! my Brother !

‘Thou shouldst die as he dies for whom none sheddeth
tears,
Filling thine eyes and fulfilling thine ears
With the brilliance of battle, the bloom and the beauty,
the splendour of spears.’

Thus to be carried home, a warrior on thy shield, with thy blood poured forth in an ecstasy of courage, life spent to its last, this had been worthy of a Cock Robin—and thy ruddy glory would have glowed in the midst of our regret.

But Cock Robin was slain by a treacherous arrow. Full of confidence, brimming with life,—true-hearted as you knew him, Cock Robin went on his way in the morning of life. In the prime of the morning, when the sun was rising to the zenith, Cock Robin sat on the bough of an aspen overhanging the water and poured forth the song of pure hope, the song of all primordial things. He sang of the battles of spring, of courage in late snows, of laborious building, of the struggle for life, of the wealth of summer, of the life-sickness of moulting, of the renewal of vigour, of the high blasts of autumn in the race of the roaring forties, of the great endurance of winter. He sang of the snow and the north wind and the true heart keeping watch and ward over its citadel within. He sang the song of trust unfailing. He joined his true note in the world’s great anthem :—‘ Thy Providence, O Father,’ and he knew that though he seemed a mortal bird, he nourished an immortal hope of the life to come. He sang without a falter, without a doubt, without a misgiving. He would sing to the end of time the song

of his race, and the Father of all things loved the Cock Robin.

But, as in the beginning of things, an enemy drew near. An eye, bitter with envy, was watching ; a fin moved in the water calculating and cold ; a bird of night glided by, with a shovel under its wing, towards the graveyard ; then an arrow whizzed from the string, unseen, and shot Cock Robin to the heart.

Woe—woe—woe to the bird that shot Cock Robin to the heart. The life of man on earth is all trial, and what shall be said of the birds of the air ? What shall be said of the death of Cock Robin ?

II

THE JUDICIAL INQUIRY BY CONSCIENCE INTO THE DEATH OF COCK ROBIN

TOWN CRIER. Oyez ! Oyez ! Cock Robin is dead ; a judicial inquiry shall be made concerning the circumstances of his death. Oyez ! Oyez ! Cock Robin was the fair mind which God had given to man, the love of Truth, and love of Knowledge, and love of Beauty, and belief in its powers, and value of its life, and the worship of the mind that lifted itself up and sang to God in the morning of time.

Oyez ! Oyez ! the fair mind is dead ! The fair mind is slain ! The inquiry shall be made, the conspiracy shall be brought to light, the Judge shall appear, Cock Robin shall be avenged.

Oyez ! Oyez ! The Judge is coming. Conscience is the Judge. *(Exit HERALD.)*

(Enter CONSCIENCE, the Judge, with attendants carrying the Book of Reason, the Book of Scripture, the Book of the Rule.)

WHO KILLED COCK ROBIN ?

CONSCIENCE *sits in the Judge's chair. The HERALD walks in at the head of a procession of seven, and places them on the floor in a semicircle with their faces to the Judge :—*

The SPARROW, UTILITARIAN,	The FLY, CYNIC,	The FISH. POLTROON.
The BEETLE, PESSIMIST,	The OWL, SELF-DECEIVER,	The DOVE. MENTAL PRAYER.
	The BULL, DEVOTEDNESS.	

Their names in front, visible as they come in ; the meanings on their backs, visible when they kneel down. CONSCIENCE looks round for some minutes in silence.

CONSCIENCE. Who killed Cock Robin ?

SPARROW. I,

HERALD. said the Sparrow.

SPARROW. With my bow and arrow,
I killed Cock Robin.

CONSCIENCE. Who are you ?

SPARROW. I am a Utilitarian.

CONSCIENCE. Why did you kill Cock Robin ?

SPARROW. I saw no use in his survival, there was nothing particular for him to do. There was a great deal to be done, but other birds did it ; *we* did it—anybody could do it, there was no use in him.

CONSCIENCE. How did you kill him ?

SPARROW. As I mentioned already, with my bow and arrow.

CONSCIENCE. Was the arrow poisoned ?

SPARROW. It was.

CONSCIENCE. With what ?

SPARROW. With a poisonous thought.

CONSCIENCE. What was the thought ?

SPARROW. It was a deadly poison.

CONSCIENCE. What was the nature of it?

SPARROW. That is a trade secret.

CONSCIENCE. Belonging to what firm?

SPARROW. To the Utilitarians.

CONSCIENCE. There is no such thing as a trade secret before the tribunal of Conscience.

SPARROW. Do you insist on knowing?

CONSCIENCE. I require it and without subterfuge.

SPARROW. Then this is it—the poisonous thought is: ‘What is the use?’ I have killed many a fair mind with it.

CONSCIENCE. That is a brazen confession of guilt for which you deserve to be spatch-cocked without further ceremony—thus applying your own formula to yourself. But as this court is open for an educational inquiry, you shall be obliged to give the analysis of the poison, for the protection of the public. Expose your principles.

SPARROW. People should have in view one thing only—proximate usefulness, and they should not go beyond that, I take three classes of persons as illustrations. The Professional person. Notice that the Professional person is sometimes *very busy indeed*—like myself, I have a great deal to do. One must concentrate oneself and see everything under the aspect of the proximately useful. Every new experience must be turned to immediate account or else forgotten. Everything heard must be translated into the weights and measures of a class balance-sheet—labelled and set in order, as class, illustration, explanation, ready at a moment’s notice; if it will not translate, let it go, it is not worth preserving. If any visitation of thought or inquiry should come to the mind of the Professional person, it should be checked until it can answer the question, ‘what is the use of this?’ And if unable to give an account of itself immediately, it must be abandoned.

CONSCIENCE. Thus the Professional person is

narrowed and cramped into an account book. So much for so much ; balanced at the end of the year, neither loss nor gain, and therefore grievous loss. The fair mind is cramped and crippled for want of the large spaces of thought and leisure in which the wisdom of the scribe cometh. If the proximate use *is* attained and the proximate want satisfied, the Professional person is dwindling in the process, for want of those large oblivions, in which the *bonum honestum*, the honourable and lovely good implants itself. If to-morrow be too much remembered, it will take no thought for the things of itself, but if the Professional person will seek truth,

‘ God surely will contrive
Use for our learning.’

And the greater faculties will thrive to exhilaration and give the hundredfold, keeping no accounts.

SPARROW. I am a busy bird and abstract principles have no hold upon me. I give the same plain and straightforward advice to the Religious Person. Seek the thing that is immediately useful, eliminate the rest, do not learn, do not consider, do not inquire. Be most careful to spare all useless aspirations, learn for your employment, leave all else aside. Consort with birds of the same feather, seek no interchange of ideas. What is the use of them ? Keep to the hard cash of the mind, facts and figures. Do not be deluded with large cheques. *Hear* the chink of your coppers. Small profits and quick returns—that is utility.

CONSCIENCE. And with this you have made an end of the fair mind of many deluded religious persons. Have you no remorse ?

SPARROW. None. This is my idea of how religious persons should carry on their life.

CONSCIENCE. You seem delighted.

SPARROW. I am, because I have saved them so much waste, and the burden of unused learning.

CONSCIENCE. You never thought of the qualities of

the religious persons' mind, and the beauty of gems polished to perfection ?

SPARROW. Never. These thoughts would be useless to me. I wish to see results. I slay the useless. The Spiritual person, who comes in my way, receives the same treatment. I try to get that idea of generosity out of his head. I call it waste of time and effort. I try to concentrate him on other things. What is the use of aspirations and speculations ? Let him hold to effects. What is the use of desires ? Let him handle the facts of life. What is the use of ideals ? Let him keep to the real.

CONSCIENCE. Made for heaven, let him fetter himself to earth. Treacherous bird ! You have ensnared the choicest winged and sweetest throated songsters and shut up the fair minds of spiritual persons in the wire cages of scruples and conventionalities. I have heard enough of you. Your principles are condemned out of your own mouth. Let the birds of the interior kingdom alone, and depart, utilitarian fowl that you are, to the regions where the cage door is shut and the mind of man is made its own prison-house. The crime of slaying the redbreast will lie upon your race from generation to generation. Depart !
(Exit SPARROW.)

CONSCIENCE. Who saw him die ?

FLY. I,

HERALD. said the Fly.

FLY. With my little eye,
I saw him die.

CONSCIENCE. Were you aware of what was taking place ?

FLY. Exceedingly alive to it and aware. I had watched it all coming from the beginning.

CONSCIENCE. You gave no warning of danger ?

FLY. It was not my affair. My policy is one of non-interference. I see everything, but my knowledge of bird nature prevents me from interfering. It is resented.

Who am I? A fly, very well. A fly, one thousand eyes in my head, but not one at your service. Let each bird look out for himself.

‘I care for nobody—no, not I,
And nobody cares for me.’

I ask for nothing and give nothing. *I see* and go my way.

CONSCIENCE. Self-seeking, cynical insect !

FLY. Excuse me, not self-seeking. No need to seek, for I have found myself. Cynical, yes, but that is the temper of my mind, nothing can alter me.

CONSCIENCE. What had you against the fair mind of the Cock Robin ?

FLY. Nothing whatever. Nothing but the most complete indifference. He never caught flies, what is the rest to me ? But it was a curious experience. With my little eye, I saw him die. Probably, I could give you the best evidence of all those concerned in the transaction. For I am a Cynic, with a thousand eyes. And in as far as I care at all about it, his death is rather a relief. There is less noise in the garden, I can hear myself buzz.

CONSCIENCE. To whom do you buzz ?

FLY. To myself—the only audience which appreciates the performance. Now, having nothing to add, with your leave, I will go, I don’t like society.

CONSCIENCE. You may go. Between cynicism and conscience there can be no understanding. Begone to the regions, where they *see* and do nothing for others, finding themselves, for ever and ever. Begone ! Lest all fair minds be slain by cynicism. *(Exit FLY.)*

CONSCIENCE. Who caught his blood ?

FISH. I,

HERALD. said the Fish,

FISH. In my little dish,
I caught his blood.

CONSCIENCE. What for ?

FISH. My own ran so cold.

CONSCIENCE. Did you drink his courageous heart's blood ?

FISH. No, at the last I was afraid, and spilt it in the water.

CONSCIENCE. Of what were you afraid ?

FISH. I am a Poltroon, and have a fastidious disgust for virtuous exertion.

CONSCIENCE. To speak plainly, you fear labour and trouble ?

FISH. That is so.

CONSCIENCE. How do you look on life ?

FISH. A series of escapes from these, especially virtuous exertion of mind. My only aim is to have as few stripes as may be—and the servant who did not know was beaten with few stripes.

CONSCIENCE. That was the servant who *could* not know, not the one who was afraid to learn. You flat sole, you go through your appointed round of life holding a dish for the warm life-blood of the redbreast. What are you doing with your own life ?

FISH. I haven't got much, and I am doing little with it. I am the Poltroon.

CONSCIENCE. Can't you be converted ? You had no aggressive share in this murder of the Cock Robin. You may yet make amends.

FISH. If I thought it possible !

CONSCIENCE. You may become a flying-fish, such transformations have been heard of. A little flight at first, then longer and longer, till an incredible length is sustained. Go, timid sole, and try.

FISH. And if I die of the endeavour ?

CONSCIENCE. An honourable death is so great a thing that no one should refuse the opportunity to himself or to his friend. I wish you a short flight, a long flight, and a happy end.

FISH. A quiet night and a perfect end.

CONSCIENCE. Better than a quiet night for you is a steadfast vigil.

FISH. I am mortally afraid, but I will try a short flight. (Exit FISH.)

CONSCIENCE. Who 'll make his shroud ?

BEETLE. I,

HERALD. said the Beetle,

BEETLE. With my thread and needle,
I 'll make his shroud.

I have been in advance with the order, and done it already. (*Holds up the shroud.*)

CONSCIENCE. Who gave the order ?

BEETLE. The Sparrow.

CONSCIENCE. Who gave the measurements ?

BEETLE. The Fly.

CONSCIENCE. And you, what are you yourself ?

BEETLE. I am a Pessimist, a black beetle. I maintain the most unfavourable view of everything in nature. I am the universal complainer and the perpetual complaint. I see how things go from bad to worse, and will go on until the end of all things. So, in advance, I make shrouds to order, to fit any mind. I prepare the fair mind for burial. I am the logical exponent of the Sparrow's utilitarianism. No use, no use, no use, this I repeat, this I maintain. The utilitarian sparrow holds that what is not of proximate usefulness is of no account. I draw the conclusion. Nobody can really tell what is of proximate usefulness, so why attempt even that ? Things change so rapidly, better lie down and die.

CONSCIENCE. Repulsive object ! Would that you would do so indeed—yourself and no other.

BEETLE. The obstacle is, that what kills others feeds me ; whereas those who feed on me die by inches. The gallant Cock Robin himself, if he feeds upon me, dies a worse death than he has died already. The death of *felo de se*.

CONSCIENCE. A Cock Robin has never died such a death.

BEETLE. Ah ! Who knows ?

CONSCIENCE. Take away your shroud, unhappy thing, and bury *yourself* in it, it shall never touch the heroic limbs of the Cock Robin.

BEETLE. Am I to bury myself alive or dead ?

CONSCIENCE. Exactly as you choose, but beyond all reach of a resurrection. *(Exit BEETLE.)*

Who 'll dig his grave ?

OWL. I,

HERALD. said the Owl,

OWL. With my spade and shovel,
I 'll dig his grave.

CONSCIENCE. Bird of night, was it you who flew past as the Cock Robin fell to the arrow of the utilitarian animal ?

OWL. It was I. I was hastening to the obsequies. I believed it to be my duty and I knew the thing was inevitable, and thought it the only justifiable course.

CONSCIENCE. Did you ever read of the servant who buried his talent in the earth ?

OWL. Quite a different case. I should bury the Cock Robin with the deepest regret, but what could I do ?

CONSCIENCE. You could have carried off the Sparrow.

OWL. True, such a pity that one knows these things too late.

CONSCIENCE. That is cheap as a defence. I know your blinking race that fears the light of day. It has always an excuse. Too early yet, then too late, too small a chance, then too great an occasion. When you have closed your eyes and pretended not to see, then you open them wide and say the opportunity is much to be regretted. In the end you will accept blame with

a discreet smile, you will persuade yourself that this is humility ; it is the last loophole through which you evade the duty of action 'in the living present.' You will excuse, apologise, feign, procrastinate, explain, suggest, lament, prescribe, protest, promise, announce, give assurance, give security, and in the end evade and escape. You are the arch Self-deceiver, and your obsequious services at the burial show that your nest is in the whitened sepulchre itself. Away ! and come not near the hero's funeral. (OWL goes off hooting.)

CONSCIENCE. They are all judged and condemned. I am left with the friends and mourners.

Who 'll be the chief mourner ?

DOVE.

I,

HERALD.

said the Dove,

DOVE.

I 'll mourn for my love,

I 'll be the chief mourner.

CONSCIENCE. What relation are you ?

DOVE. The fair mind is the friend of Mental Prayer. The utilitarian is its enemy. No one who asks 'What is the use ?' can be my friend. If a man should give all the substance of his house for love, he would despise it as nothing. There are minds and minds. There is Martha and there is Mary, there is also Lazarus. Martha is for business, Mary is for prayer, Lazarus is for sacrifice. Martha is a deaconess, Mary is a chorist, Lazarus is a priest. Martha's service is in some danger of growing like the Sparrow, Mary's service is mine. The service of Lazarus is best and greatest of all. He uses the fair mind for what is best, and feeds it on what is best, to make a perfect sacrifice, 'weeping as though he wept not, rejoicing as though he rejoiced not, buying as though he possessed not, using this world as though he used it not.' And this is how Lazarus lives, 'as the minister of God, in much patience in tribulation.'

CONSCIENCE. Alas, my brother, he is dead, the fair mind that should have lived for sacrifice is slain.

Who 'll toll the bell ?

BULL.

I,

HERALD.

said the Bull,

BULL.

Because I can pull,

I 'll toll the bell.

CONSCIENCE. Great devoted toiler, 'because you can pull,' you are among the friends and mourners, your great patient strength is our comfort. You have not many wits, but you are so grandly true, and you could not fail in appreciation, for the very reason that you are so true. You are Devotedness itself and no form of devotedness is strange to you. And you give what you can, the great patient pull. You shall toll the bell, for you know what we have lost. You are fit to be the chief mourner with the dove. You have not much mind, so you say, but you are the prop of those who have, and the mourner of the mind slain by the utilitarian. They thought you were one of themselves, but no, you are kin to the 'great dumb Sicilian ox,' whose bellowing has filled the Church militant. Toll, then, great mourner, for an irreparable loss.

Who 'll sing the Psalm ?

(silence.)

Who 'll sing the Psalm ?

(silence.)

Herald ! who 'll sing the Psalm.

HERALD. He hasn't come yet, he 's coming, here he is.

(Enter the THRUSH.)

CONSCIENCE. Who 'll sing the Psalm ?

THRUSH.

I,

HERALD.

says the Thrush.

THRUSH.

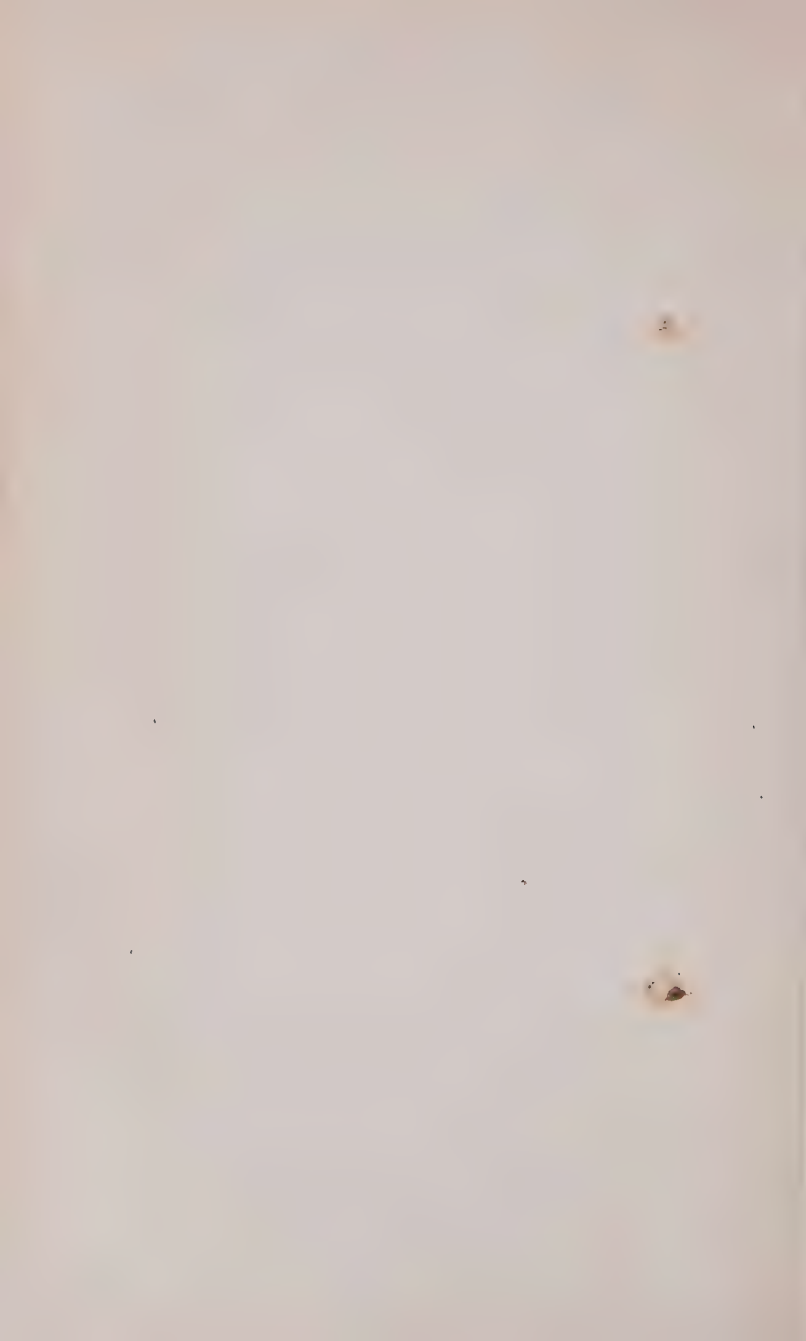
As I sit in a bush,

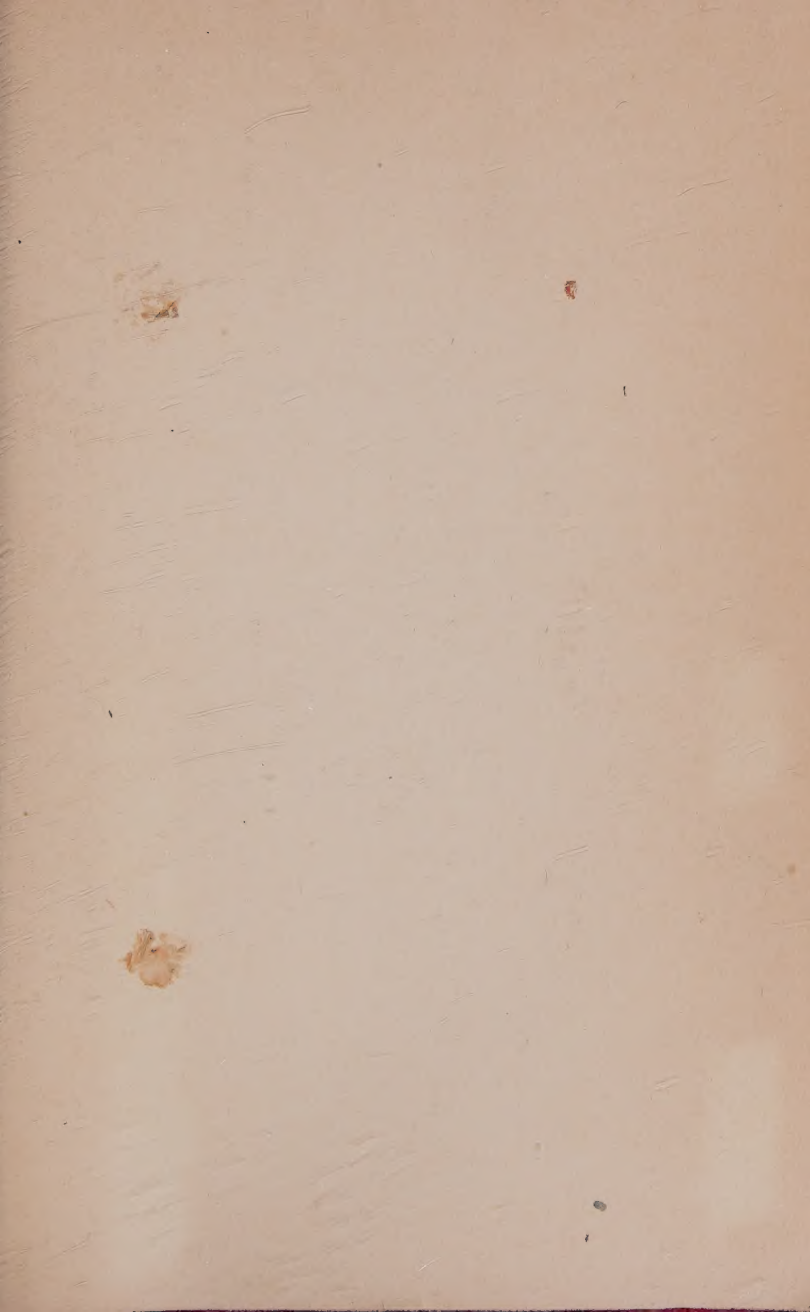
I 'll sing the Psalm.

(Sings.) 'I know that my Redeemer liveth . . .
in my flesh shall I see God.'

CONSCIENCE. The truth has broken in upon me, upon *you*, upon *us*, upon *all*, the fair mind is not dead, it is raised to a new existence by the great uplifting of faith and love ; it shall live to God. Old things have passed away, all things have become new, instead of tolling for the burial we will peal for the new life the newly risen fair mind of Cock Robin.







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HIGHWAYS AND BY-WAYS I

